The Delius Society Journal

Autumn 2005, Number 138

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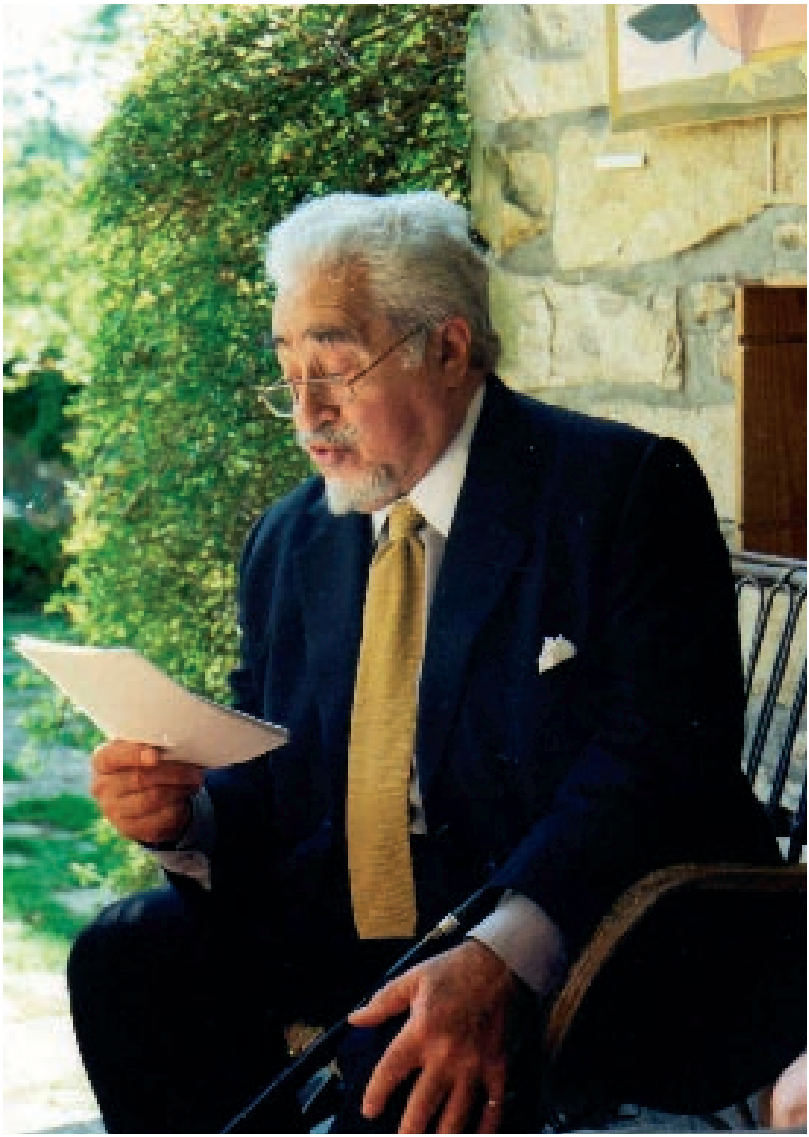
(possibly c. 1906-1907)



Felix Aprahamian
(1915-2005)

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

At the 2005 AGM, Lionel Carley was confirmed as our new President. Speaking immediately afterwards, he acknowledged the unique qualities of his predecessors, Eric Fenby and Felix Aprahamian. Eric had worked with Delius in a manner that has gone down in musical history – the word 'amanuensis' positively evokes his name – while Felix had visited the composer at Grez. The passage of time has eroded personal connections with the composer (with the happy exceptions of our Honorary Members Evelin Gerhardi, who stayed with the Deliuses for nine months in 1932, and her sister Malve Steinweg). Lionel, however, remains in virtual contact with Delius as much as anyone, as is amply shown by his splendid collection of writings on the composer. We welcome him to a long and fulfilling Presidency.

Of late, sadness and celebration have gone hand-in-hand for our Society. We were very sorry to learn that our Vice President Meredith Davies died on 9th March. A man of immense musical insight, as well as of graceful manners and modesty, he will be much missed. Helen Faulkner's obituary and Roy Massey's reminiscences appear in this edition of the *Journal*.

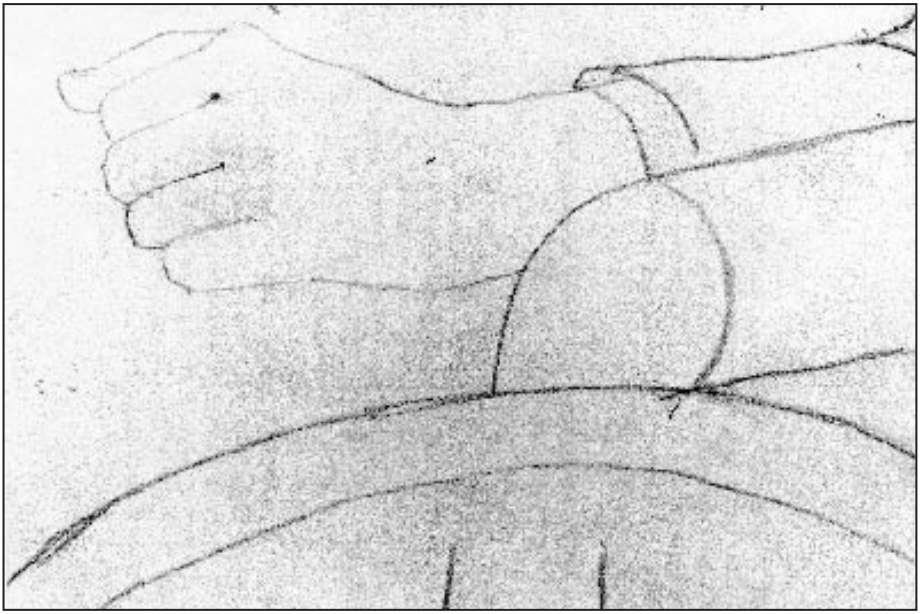
It was splendid to be able to announce, at the AGM, the appointment of Mark Elder to Vice Presidency of the Society. We are proud to acknowledge in this way his commitment to the music of Delius. We recall in particular his advocacy of the composer at last year's BBC Promenade Concerts and his Delius recordings on the Hallé Orchestra's own label. Mr Elder has identified a number of other works that he hopes to perform in Manchester. We extend a hearty welcome to him.

Many members will recall the Columbia 'Delius Society' recordings of the 1930s, with their rather dismal brownish albums packed with 12 inch 78s that held a feast of the music of Delius, recorded by the LPO under Beecham. The first volume, containing *Paris*, *Eventyr*, the closing scene from *Koanga*, the serenade from *Hassan* and two Shelley songs performed by Heddle Nash and Gerald Moore, weighs in at about six pounds. Well, you can now have it in an excellent and totally weightless transcription via the Pristine Audio Direct website (http://www.pristineaudiodirect.com) which will cost you just £3.49. You can also order a standard CD for £4.99 or a premium quality CD for £7.49. The *Hassan* item is available as a free

sample, but at 7.4 MB it will take a while to download unless you have broadband. The LSO/Anthony Collins 1953 recording, originally Decca ffrr LXT 2788, is also available from the same site. This contains *Brigg Fair*, *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* and *A Song of Summer*. Some believe that digital transfers via the internet represent the future of recorded music.

I hope to see large numbers of members at the final of the second competition for The Delius Prize, to be held at 7pm on Friday 25th November. Once again the venue is the David Josefowitz Recital Hall at London's Royal Academy of Music. Lionel Friend will be the Adjudicator. Members will be most welcome at a simple reception to be held after the event.

Roger Buckley



Delius's hand – Ernest Proctor (1929)
(Reproduced by courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery)

EDITORIAL

I must first warmly thank the many Members who have said, in emails, letters and personally, how much they have enjoyed the re-styled Journal. Like almost every voluntary job undertaken by the 'great retired', it is taking much more time than I had been led to expect – but so far, I am getting a great deal of pleasure from putting it together. Things would be very different, however, without the inestimable help of Paul Brooks in Oxford, who 'magics' all the articles and pictures together into the right places for the printers, leaving as few blank spaces as possible, with absolutely no fuss at all

I was unable to find a really good photograph of Felix Aprahamian in time to include it with his obituaries in DSJ 137, but a Member, David Butterworth, has kindly provided the one which, as I think very appropriate, is our frontispiece.

This issue also begins what I intend will be the main feature of the Journal for the next few years - the devotion of a substantial proportion of each one to a particular Delius work. We start with *The Song of the High Hills,* and some very distinguished Members have responded to my cajoling for articles - it is especially pleasing that Bo Holten agreed to write about conducting the piece. It was, of course, almost inevitable that there would be small areas of 'overlap' between the various contributions, but I decided not to apply the editorial red pen to them, and leave them for all practical purposes as they were written, because in almost every case those 'repetitions' emphasise important or interesting aspects of the background to the piece, its creation and its performance. For that reason, and because the Editor's megalomania has manifested itself in such a long article, this is (by eight pages) the longest *Journal* ever – and hope that members will find it a satisfying one.

We are all worried by the fact that these days Delius's music is rarely played, whether in concert halls or on the radio. Two articles in the last issue were on the problem, and there is a further one, and a letter, this time. I therefore think that I should declare the subject closed - at least for a while - and that we should instead turn our minds to the question of what we can realistically do about it. That letter, from Tony Noakes, makes one interesting suggestion, and it would be marvellous if other Members came forward with further ideas. Letters and emails - not necessarily for

publication - should come to me; I will pass all of them to the Committee, and report to Members on any positive outcome in DSJ 139.

Responses to my plea in DSJ 137 for new writers to volunteer themselves have sadly not been flooding into my email lnbox, but there are one or two pieces by Members (other than those on whose generous natures I have leant heavily) who, as far as I know, have never written for the Journal before - and that is very encouraging. Anyone doing something for the first time is almost invariably faced with the 'vertical learning curve', and people are understandably reluctant to put their name 'on the line'. If, however, any would-be authors would like me to publish their first offerings as being by *Anonymous,* I would happily do that - and, indeed, give any editorial help that I can. Having said that, of course, I must reserve the right not to print anything which I think is unworthy of this distinguished publication! Younger or recently retired Members, to your computers!

Martin Lee-Browne

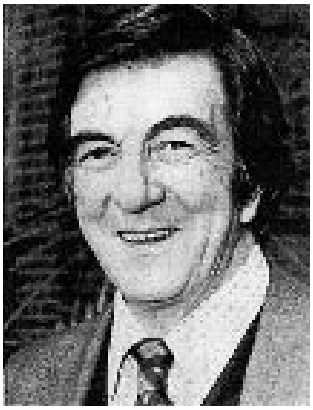
The copy date for the Spring 2006 issue of the Journal (No 138) is 15th March - and (allowing for the Editor's Easter break) it is hoped to post it to Members in the third week of April.

The main focus will be on *Sea Drift*, and Members are invited to send me articles, short items or pictures for consideration for inclusion—but by the end of the year, please.

OBITUARY

MEREDITH DAVIES (1922-2005)

Helen Faulkner



Meredith Davies CBE, FRCM, Hon RAM, Hon FTCL was a Vice President of the Delius Society from1975 until his death on 9 March 2005. He was associated with the Delius Trust from 1989, when he became a Music Adviser, and then, from 1991, as both Trustee and Chairman. After he was succeeded as Chairman by David Lloyd-Jones in 1997, Meredith continued to serve the Trust as Adviser Emeritus.

Born in Birkenhead, the son of a clergyman, Albert Meredith Davies was a junior exhibitioner at the Royal College of Music, initially as a cellist and subsequently as an organ pupil of George Thalben-Ball, taking his FRCO aged only 14. From the Stationers' Company School he won an organ scholarship to Keble College Oxford where he read PPE. His time at Oxford was interrupted by war service in the Royal Artillery from 1942-1945. Having finished his studies at Keble, Meredith was appointed, first, as conductor of the St Albans Bach Choir and then as organist and choirmaster at the Cathedral. In 1949 he moved to Hereford Cathedral where he stayed until 1956, and where his conducting career started to take off with performances in the Three Choirs Festivals of 1952 and 1955. During this period, with the encouragement of Boult, he also studied conducting in Rome. He moved to New College, Oxford as organist and Fellow in 1956, and from 1957 was conductor of the City of Birmingham Choir and assistant to Andrzej Panufnik at the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. A pivotal moment in his career came in the 1959-60 season at Birmingham, when he took over from Benjamin Britten, who was ill, the conducting of the *Spring Symphony*. This so impressed Britten that Meredith was invited to conduct *The Rape of Lucretia* and *The Turn of the Screw* with the English Opera Group at Aldeburgh, and on tour, in 1960 and 1961. In 1963 he became EOG's Musical Director. He made his Covent Garden debut conducting

Peter Grimes in 1960 and continued to be particularly associated with the music of Britten, conducting many of his operas at Covent Garden, Sadler's Wells and on tour, and sharing the conducting of the *War Requiem* with the composer at its première in Coventry Cathedral in 1962.

In the same year, he conducted Delius's *A Village Romeo and Juliet* at Sadler's Wells, a production which was broadcast on June 10 of that year. The cast included Lawrence Felley (Manz), Donald McIntyre (Marti), John Wakefield (Sali), Elsie Morrison (Vreli) and Neil Easton (Dark Fiddler). This production marked the public start of an enthusiastic commitment to the music of Delius which leaves a remarkable legacy of performances, broadcasts and recordings - all too many of which are, sadly, currently unavailable. His Delius recordings include two productions of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, one with the Sadler's Wells cast and then a 1973 EMI recording with Benjamin Luxon, Noel Mangin, Wendy Eathorne, Robert Tear, Elizabeth Harwood and John Shirley-Quirk. His recording of *Fennimore and Gerda* with Elisabeth Söderström, Robert Tear and Brian Rayner Cook is now considered to be a 'classic', as is the recording of the *Requiem* and *Idyll*. With Menuhin and Tortelier he recorded the *Violin* and *Double Concertos*.

Throughout his career Meredith championed new music, particularly by British composers. He gave the first performances of many works including Anthony Milner's *St Francis* and *Symphony No 2*, Thea Musgrave's *Triptych* and *Mary, Queen of Scots*, Lennox Berkeley's *The Castaway*, Malcolm Williamson's *English Eccentrics* and the British première of Alexander Goehr's *Arden Must Die*. An opera man through and through, Meredith conducted a wide range of more standard repertoire, and amongst performances which are still talked of with great admiration are an *Idomeneo* with Pauline Tinsley for Chelsea Opera Group, and *La Rondine* with June Bronhill for the English Opera Group.

For seven years from 1964, Meredith was Musical Director of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. Though his visits back to the UK during this period were not particularly frequent, he managed, from 1969, to combine this appointment with that of conductor of the BBC Training Orchestra, based in Bristol. When he returned permanently from Canada, he became Music Director of the Royal Choral Society and, from 1975, of the Leeds Philharmonic Society. Having taught for some years at the Royal College of Music, Meredith took up the challenging post of Principal

of Trinity College of Music in 1979 and also did valuable work with the London Schools Symphony Orchestra.

There was a fundamental modesty about Meredith. Latterly he seemed happiest in informal settings, chatting, reminiscing and enjoying good food and wine. His one visit to the Delius Festival in Florida in 1990 was a particularly happy time. He was greatly moved by a visit to Solano Grove and later charmed his hosts with stories of his career and the more outrageous characters he had worked with. Not really a 'committee' or a 'meetings' man, Meredith gave his only talk to the Delius Society in January 1973, with the record producer Christopher Bishop on the subject of his then new recording of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. Although invited to give a talk about conducting Delius in the 1991-2 season he decided not to, apparently because he felt that he was not in the same league as Sir Charles Mackerras and Richard Hickox. How wrong he was, but how lucky we are to have, as his memorial, those of his fine recordings which are currently available, and the hope that those which are not might be taken up and re-issued.

© Helen Faulkner 2005

(Note: I am grateful to Jeff Driggers and Brian Radford for providing me with information and personal reminiscences of Meredith.)

SOME REMINISCENCES OF MEREDITH DAVIES

Roy Massey

My close association with Meredith Davies lasted only for a few years, but he made a great impression on me. He was also wonderfully helpful and encouraging to me as a young man, and I am extremely grateful for the good fortune which enabled me to work with him at a formative period in my career.

In my youth I was lucky enough to be appointed accompanist to the City of Birmingham Choir under David Willcocks. He had come to Worcester as organist in 1950 and very soon took over the Birmingham Choir, which was going through a slightly unsettled period after having lost their well-beloved conductor Dr G D Cunningham a year or two before. Willcocks rapidly re-established their morale and transformed their standard of performance, and it was a great privilege for me as a student to sit at the piano week by week and watch such a wonderful choir trainer at work. It was his task to re-establish and develop the general technique of the Choir, and we all marvelled at his uncanny ear and infallible sense of absolute pitch. Every singer felt that he could hear quite clearly every note they sang individually, and he occasionally scared them to death by going along the choral rows to pin-point a recalcitrant voice or a dodgy piece of intonation. He gave the choir a sound technique in every way, creating a fine ensemble with secure intonation and excellent blend and balance, making them fully equipped to give some outstanding performances. The news of his appointment as Director of Music at Kings College Cambridge in 1957 was received with great regret by the Choir, who had enjoyed enormously the seven happy years under his leadership.

Meredith Davies was appointed as his successor at Birmingham, and once again I was to sit every Tuesday evening under the spell of a consummate choral conductor. Meredith had inherited a fine body of singers, and it was a splendid experience for me to watch him putting the stamp of his own musical personality upon them. The choir's general technique was now very secure, and it was time for more subtleties of style, a greater range of vocal colour, more challenging repertoire and an ever-rising standard in performances increasingly delivered with great panache. A sense of adventure was in the air, all generated by a conductor of great

charm and stunning musicianship, who had a magnificent conducting technique and a Welsh orator's way with words. He often expressed himself very vividly with many a memorable turn of phrase and, of course, his whole approach was capped by a wonderfully mischievous sense of humour. He often had the choir in fits of laughter, and many a tense moment in rehearsal would be resolved by his marvellous lightness of touch. Inevitably, he inspired great loyalty among his singers - a contralto one day was heard to say as she looked at him adoringly, "Ee, ain't he lovely. I could drink his bath water!" During this period we also extended the range of languages in which we sang, and it seems incredible these days that our first performance of Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem* in its original tongue seemed quite an undertaking. The choir had to be taught the pronunciation phonetically, and rehearsals were sometimes enlivened by the lady who had been designated to help with this having vehement disagreements with a schoolmistress in the choir who also taught German, while the rest of us sat in bemused silence awaiting the outcome of their exchanges. Meredith took over in Birmingham during the Elgar Centenary year, when we did *The Apostles*, *The Dream of Gerontius* and *The Kingdom* in the course of the twelve months, and the performance of *The Kingdom* was his first concert with the choir. I was at once taken with his complete mastery of the orchestra and the way he gave unity to a piece which isn't always easy to hold together. Later that season he went on to conduct the first performance for the BBC of Anthony Milner's *St Francis* in the presence of the composer. But I suppose my most vivid musical memory was the way he used to rehearse the music of Benjamin Britten and the authoritative performances which ensued. I was very excited by the performance we gave in 1960 of the *Spring Symphony* in the presence of the composer, and then in 1963 by the first performance in Birmingham of the *War Requiem*, which was repeated a year later in St Alban's Abbey, at what turned out to be Meredith's last concert as official conductor of the City Choir. We had watched with interest the 1962 genesis of the *Requiem* at Coventry under Meredith's direction, and had heard of the problems he experienced with the body of singers he had at his disposal and the unsatisfactory nature of the Cathedral's acoustic. I managed to sneak into the Cathedral for the final rehearsal, and still have vivid memories of the sound of Heather Harper standing in the pulpit singing the *Lacrymosa dies illa* absolutely wonderfully, and the sight of the Festival chorus stacked

up rather uncomfortably under Graham Sutherland's great tapestry. The City Choir tackled the *Requiem* with great enthusiasm and sang to an absolutely capacity audience in Birmingham Town Hall, and I recall the performance made a very great impression. I also remember Jennifer Vyvian, the soprano soloist on this occasion, coming into the Town Hall organ loft with me and singing superbly from that elevated position.

Our ways parted soon after this and we met less often in later years, but when I eventually arrived in Hereford as Cathedral Organist in 1974, I discovered that Meredith Davies was far from forgotten in the city. He had been organist from 1949 to 1956 and chief conductor of the Three Choirs Festivals in 1952 and 1955, and was remembered by many with admiration and affection. The lively triumvirate of the young David Willcocks at Worcester, the more mature Herbert Sumsion at Gloucester, and Meredith took the Festival into a new era, with a complete re-structuring of the quite impossible rehearsal schedule; a long overdue reform which made possible much more adventurous programming. They also started the long haul of tightening up the standards of performance, and the subsequent development and success of the Three Choirs during the latter half of the twentieth century undoubtedly began at this period. It was almost certainly at this time that Meredith's considerable gifts as a conductor really became apparent and the Dean and Chapter of Hereford were far sighted enough to allow him time off from his Cathedral duties in order to study in Rome.

A little act typical of Meredith's kindness and generosity took place on the eve of my first Hereford Three Choirs in 1976. My wife and I heard someone trying to post something through our rather odd letter box, and when we opened the door, there was Meredith leaving me a note of good wishes as I embarked on my first Festival. Unfortunately, I was almost immediately en route for a rehearsal so had no time to talk, but I very much appreciated this kindly and thoughtful gesture. Again, in 1987 we had a dinner to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of Hereford Choral Society and we managed to assemble all living past Conductors of the Society – Meredith Davies, Melville Cook and Richard Lloyd. We had hoped to have with us Lady Hull, the widow of Sir Percy Hull and herself a pupil of G R Sinclair of bulldog Dan fame. This would have taken us back in the history of the Society, albeit slightly tenuously, to 1889, but sadly she suffered a fall on the morning of the dinner and had

to be marked absent. Meredith was our speaker, and made an absolutely brilliant speech in his inimitable style. He recalled auditioning a rather elderly tenor for the Festival chorus, who prefaced his ordeal by removing his false teeth and placing them on the top of the piano, as he maintained he sang better without them. Lastly, at the Hereford Festival of 1997 I caught a glimpse of Meredith again. We were reviving *Cantiones Sacrae* by John Gardner, a piece premiered by Meredith at his first Three Choirs in 1952. It is a splendid work, but quite demanding for the chorus. In the few words I managed to have with him afterwards, he commented how very hard the singers of 1952 had found it, but thought we did rather better!

Others will have known Meredith more intimately or worked with him more extensively during his long musical career, but as a youngster in Birmingham it was my good fortune to sit under his baton and play for him for a few years, and I shall ever be grateful for his encouragement, friendship and inspiration in those far off days and for his kindly interest in the years which followed.

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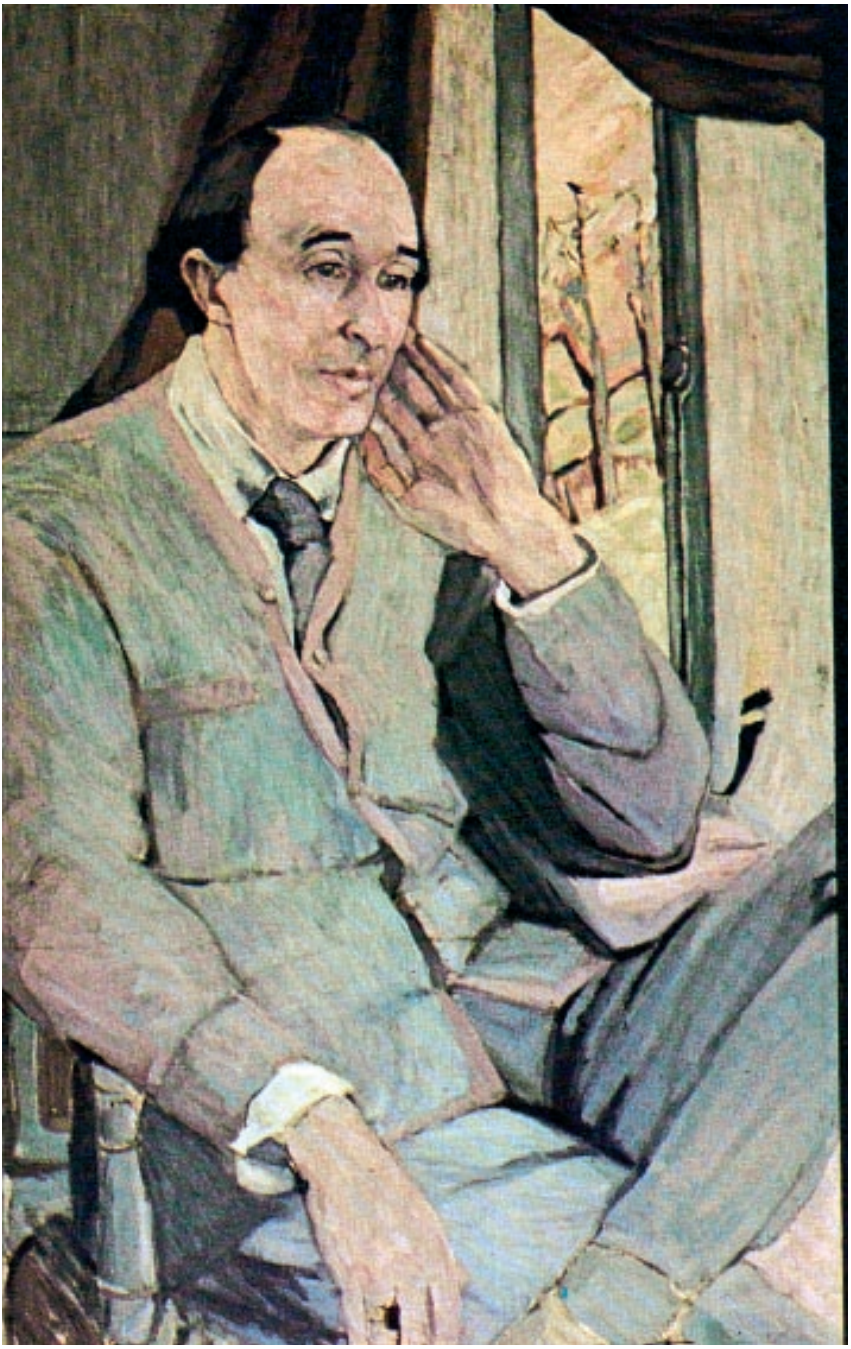
LIMPSFIELD

Norman Jones, a Member living in Hanover, sent in this extract from the Surrey volume of The King's England, a well-known series of travel books of the late 1930's. The author was Arthur Mee:

We are not surprised that it has gathered many famous folk about it, for it is one of Nature's lovely places. Its winding ways, its tiny green, its Little Heath and its Great Chart, make it pure delight. As for the village street, we felt when we called that, with all its charm, it has nothing lovelier than its churchyard, full of sunshine and fine trees, and with a rich green carpet from which rise the Norman walls and the low Norman tower known to multitudes of Surrey folk We found a thorn growing from a sprig of the holy thorn at Glastonbury. We found a War Memorial with beautiful lettering, erected to those who live for evermore *by those who loved them.* We found a comic little face on a gravestone between two scallop shells, and a stone with three 18th century cherubs.

Into all this interest and beauty and history we come through a lychgate which has stood inviting pilgrims here since 1350. It seemed to us like one of the places where Time comes home to sleep, and under an old yew in the churchyard lies the blind old musician Delius, who wished to come home to England to sleep after his life in France, and after burial in France was brought to Limpsfield and laid to rest here at midnight. His wife, crossing the Channel with his body, caught a chill and was laid in his grave two days after him. For a long time music-lovers will wend their way to this little churchyard. It was one of the last wishes of Frederick Delius that his poor body might be laid in the peace of an English country churchyard, and it was to Limpsfield they brought him. Blind at the last, and stricken with paralysis, yet working heroically to the end, he had come to feel that only such a place as this could be his last home on Earth. He stands alone in the story of music, a solitary figure, like no other and copying none, masterly within his limits, personal in his utterance, a seeker after pure emotion and its expression in sound.

His story has very little to do with his native England, yet in his music he sought to express her magic, her quiet and rolling countryside, her simple people, and her natural and peaceful charm. it is not that Delius was an imitator of the sounds of Nature, but that (as someone has said) he seems to show us the influence of Nature on our souls. The very names of his works are poetry, for who can think without enchantment of *A Village Romeo and Juliet, Sea-Dnft, The Song of the High Hills, A Summer Night on the River,* and *Songs of Farewell*? It is in his works for the orchestra and for voices that we hear his genius at its best, and even in his last tragic years he was labouring on at them, dictating note by note when an hour or two's work in a day was all that his broken body could stand. He has a sure place in the affections of music-lovers everywhere.



Delius in 1912 by Ida Gerhardi

THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

DELIUS AND NORWAY

Asbjørn Ø. Eriksen[1]

In a Delius Journal dedicated to *The Song of the High Hills* an account of Frederick Delius's relationship with Norway seems most appropriate. With the possible exception of Percy Grainger, I do not know of any other foreign composer with such close ties to our country. I do not consider myself a Delius specialist, but as a Norwegian musicologist who has been attracted to his music since the 1970s, I will try to survey the subject. The essay is divided into three parts; first, a biographical part about Delius's relationships with Norwegians and visits to Norway, second, a part discussing Norwegian elements in his music, and, third, a short evaluation of the position of his music in Norway today.

People and places

During the last two decades of the 19th century Delius made friends with a great number of Norwegians, including composers, musicians, writers and painters. These relations have been thoroughly investigated in Delius literature, and I am not proposing to deepen the subject here.[2] I would just like to emphasize the remarkable fact that of what might be claimed to be Norway's three most famous persons within the cultural sphere, Henrik Ibsen, Edvard Grieg and Edvard Munch, Delius formed close friendships with two of them. Delius met Grieg (1843-1907) for the first time in the autumn of 1887 in Leipzig, while studying at the conservatoire there. He was by then 25 years old. Many years later Delius told Percy Grainger "I was very proud at having made his acquaintance, for since I was a little boy I had loved his music. I had as a child been accustomed to Mozart and Beethoven and when I first heard Grieg it was as if a breath of fresh mountain air had come to me." [2] As is known, Grieg's music exercised a considerable influence on Delius's works. A drawing of Delius by Edvard Munch (1863-1944) was published in the Christiania (Oslo) newspaper *Verdens Gang* in October 1891, in connection with the performance of the 'concert overture' *Paa Vidderne,* but there is no record of their meeting on

that occasion. They certainly saw each other in Paris in 1896 – the same year as Delius met Jelka – and subsequently maintained contact until Delius' death in 1934. At the beginning of the 1920s Munch made two lithographic portraits of him.[4] In his discussion of the relations between the two men, John Boulton Smith concludes that their associations were distinguished by mutual respect. There is some doubt whether Munch actually knew Delius's music. Boulton Smith thinks that "whereas Delius's liking for Munch as a person was augmented by an admiration for his art, it was Delius's personality which particularly attracted Munch."[5] As to the significance of Munch's art on Delius's music, it has been suggested that Munch's expressionist paintings contributed to the darker colorings in some of Delius's later works. [6]

Only in the beginning of the 19th century did a few audacious pioneers start to explore the Norwegian *fjellheimen* (mountain wilds), undoubtedly inspired by Romantic worship of the untouched and divine Nature. However, the mountains were terra incognita to most people until *Den Norske Turistforening* (The Norwegian Mountain Touring Association) was founded in 1868. In the following years cottages were build, maps drawn and tracks marked out (from the 1880s with the characteristic red "T"), resulting in a considerable increase in the number of mountain hikers. There also arrived several Englishmen, including the famous climber William Cecil Slingsby (the first to reach the top of Store Skagastølstind in Jotunheimen, in 1876) and Delius. His whereabouts during his first visit to Norway in 1881 are insufficiently recorded. At his next visit to Norway in the summer of 1887, he walked on the Hardangervidda, a mountain plateau east of Bergen. In 1889 he walked in the Jotunheimen mountains, accompanied by Grieg and the composer Christian Sinding. Earlier that year Sinding, being an inexperienced mountain climber, wrote to Delius: "It really is shameful for me as a Norwegian that I should need you, the foreigner, to be my guide in my own country." [7] The trip is described in Delius's diary, and he gave an account of it to Percy Grainger as well.[8] In the light of Grieg's somewhat weak health, some of their routes must have been rather fatiguing, for example the six-hours walk from Eidsbugaren to Gjendebu (29 July).

In 1888 Delius wrote to Grieg, "I have in mind [...] to live in Norway. That is 8 months in the year & 4 months in Leipzig or Paris." [9] This plan was not carried out, but he did visit Norway several times between 1887

and 1923, often staying for months at a time. In 1921 he had a cottage built, "Høifagerli" at Lesjaskog in the valley of Gudbrandsdalen, about 600 miles north of Oslo. He and Jelka lived there in the summers of 1922 and 1923.[10] I visited this beautiful place, situated some 750 metres above sea level, in July 1993. The cottage had been pulled down a long time ago. However, we met an old man, Sigurd Øverli, who well remembered Delius being carried up to the nearby mountain Liahovda 70 years earlier.[11] Due to his fatal illness, Delius was never to return to his beloved Norway after 1923.

Norwegian elements in Delius's music

Delius composed several works associated with Norway in the sense that they are based on extra-musical sources of Norwegian origin, or that their titles are associated with this country:

Norwegische Schlittenfahrt, piano piece (1887)[12]
16 Songs (voice and piano) set to poems by Bjørnson, Welhaven, J Paulsen, T Kjerulf, A Munch, Ibsen, Vinje, V Krag (1885-1891)
2 Partsongs set to poems by Bjørnson and Ibsen (1887, 1891)
Paa Vidderne [*On the Heights*], after Ibsen's cycle of poems (Version 1: Reciter and orch., 1888; Version 2 as 'concert overture' for orch., 1890-92)
Incidental music to Gunnar Heiberg's play *Folkeraadet* [*The People's Parliament*] (1897)
The Song of the High Hills, chorus and orch. (1911)
On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring, for small orch. (1912) (quotes the Norwegian folk melody *In Ola-dalom*)
Eventyr (Once upon a time), after Asbjørnsen's folktales, for orch. (1917)

These works testify to Delius' deep involvement in Norwegian culture. Are there also salient Norwegian traits in the music itself, i.e. influences from Norwegian folk music? Now, the concept itself of a distinctive Norwegian musical style in art music is problematic. Carl Dahlhaus, the eminent German musicologist, maintains that "regardless of the milieu being depicted, exoticism and folklorism almost invariably make do with the same technical devices: pentatonicism, the Dorian sixth and Mixolydian seventh, the raised second and augmented fourth,

nonfunctional chromatic coloration, and finally bass drones, ostinatos, and pedal points as central axes."[13] To a certain extent he is right. For example, the lydian (major with raised fourth) turns in Grieg's works are commonly regarded as a Norwegian characteristic, but similar turns are found in mazurkas by Chopin. However, in certain contexts we easily accept them as'Norwegian'. For example, probably because *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* makes use of a Norwegian folk melody (harmonized by Grieg in his Op. 66, 1896), we are apt to associate the lydian color of the first bars with Norway (Example 1):

Example 1. *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring,* b. 1-4 (arranged for piano by Gerard Bunk)

Moreover, the first four steps of the lydian scale correspond to 8th-11th tones of the overtone series, a feature contributing to the"outdoor"quality of this music. Apart from the quotations of a Norwegian folk tune in *On Hearing..,* Delius also utilizes Norwegian melodies in his incidental music to Heiberg's *Folkeraadet,* more precisely the national anthem and two folk melodies of which one, *Kjerringa med staven* [*The woman with the stick*] is treated in a manner similar to the melodies in Johan Svendsen's four Norwegian Rhapsodies (1876-77).

Apart from the above-mentioned examples, the main reason that Delius's works sometimes sound Norwegian is their resemblance to the music of Grieg. Often there is a kinship in character, especially when the composers are contemplating nature; for example, Grieg's song *Våren* [*Last Spring*], in the version for string orchestra (Op. 34 No. 2, 1880), seems to have influenced several 'tranquil-elegiac' sections in Delius's orchestral works. In the matter of style and form, the influence of Grieg manifests itself in the design of shorter segments – specific melodic and harmonic turns – rather than in the overall form of whole works or movements.

Many such similarities have been discussed by earlier writers, and I will give no example here. However, when it comes to their harmonic and tonal thinking there is also a more basic similarity, permeating the whole musical discourse: as Christopher Palmer has pointed out, both composers have a predilection for combining diatonicism and chromaticism.[14] Using the terminology of Polish-American musicologist Joseph Yasser, Grieg's chromaticism may be described as *intratonal,* i.e. the chromaticism unfolds within one single key, while, for example, Wagner's Tristan chromaticism is *intertonal,* i.e. with key changes throughout. Although Delius's key centres appear to change more rapidly than Grieg's, their music nevertheless resembles the other's in this respect. More specifically, in both composers *diatonic* melodies in the upper voice acquire a heightened expressivity by being accompanied by *chromatic* movements in the lower voices. I restrict myself to one example of Grieg's influence on Delius with regard to this feature. Example 2a shows the concluding bars of Grieg's piano arrangement of the Norwegian folk song *Siri Dale-visen* [*The Siri Dale-song*], Op. 66 No. 4 (1896). While the melody in the upper voice is diatonic in G minor, the three accompanying lower voices moves chromatically downwards, constituting a chain of dominant seventh chords (put in brackets in the example). In Example 2b from the second movement of Delius's *Sonata No. 3* for violin and piano (1930) the violin part moves entirely within the steps of (aeolian) G minor, while the piano part moves chromatically downwards (bracketed), the chords being mainly of dominant seventh structure, just as in the Grieg example.

Example 2a. Grieg: *Siri Dale-visen*, Op. 66 No. 4, concluding bars

Example 2b. Delius: *Sonata No. 3* for violin and piano, second movement b. 41-47

Despite the presence of a 'scotch snap' in bars two and three of the violin part, the excerpt sounds strikingly like Grieg. Lionel Carley points out that "modern scholars..... have seen that the debt [to Grieg] is finite, and by the time *Appalachia* was composed, in 1902, Delius had worked Grieg out of his system."[15] I think that Ex. 2b, from one of Delius's last works (1930), shows that in the matter of harmony and tonal thinking he was indebted to Grieg throughout his creative life.

The position of Delius's music in Norway today

In this part of the article I shall present some rather disheartening facts. While English researchers have thoroughly studied Delius's interest in Norway and Norwegian music, Norwegians have by no means taken a corresponding interest in Delius. I believe that his music is not particularly well-known among a wider Norwegian audience. The head of Norway's best classical CD shop, a branch of Norsk Musikforlag A/S in Oslo, informs me that there is little demand for his music. His works are rarely played by our orchestras; Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, for example, has not programmed one work by Delius since 1985. I doubt that his larger works, such as the operas, the concertos, *Sea Drift* and *The Song of the High Hills,* have been performed in Norway at all. The chamber music and songs have fared a little better; the only recent recording, made in 1994, is 14 of his songs set to Norwegian by the Norwegian singer Marit Osnes Aambø and pianist Graham Johnson (Simax PSC 1120). Nor has Delius received much attention in Norwegian musicological circles. Apart from Gunnar Rugstad's article on Sinding and Delius (see note 7) – which moreover is primarily about Sinding – not one work on Delius and his music has ever been published by Norwegian musicologists.

There are several causes of this situation. In present Western societies, a multitude of musical styles and genres spread through the mass media competes for the listener's attention, most people preferring 'lowbrow' popular music to 'highbrow' classical music. Nevertheless, a considerable number of people in Norway do listen to classical music, but as the works of Delius are outside of the standard repertoire most listeners are simply unaware of the composer's existence. As to the lack of interest in Delius among Norwegian musicologists, I would emphasize that this may be extended to comprise all English music from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Norwegian musicology has taken a particular interest in Austro-German, French and Russian music from this period, while the English composers are conspicuously absent. To conclude, then, in order that Delius's music should reach a wider Norwegian audience, it must be played considerably more often on the radio and TV, our best orchestras and musicians have to promote and play it, and professional writers on music (musicologists, journalists) have to call attention to it. As long as these conditions are not met, I think that Delius' beautiful and distinctive music will continue to appeal only to a small group of dedicated Norwegian listeners.

However, I will close in a more optimistic vein. Professor Jon Faukstad at the Norwegian Academy of Music has taken the initiative to a Delius concert next summer at Lesja, not far away from the place of Delius's former cottage. The programme has not as yet been decided, but there will at least be chamber music and part songs, plus a talk on Delius by this writer. May we hope that this concert will induce increasing interest in the music of Delius in Norway!

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[1] Asbjørn Eriksen is Associate Professor in the Department of Musicology at Oslo University.

[2] See, for example, Rachel Lowe: *Frederick Delius and Norway*, (Christopher Redwood (ed.) in A Delius Companion (John Calder 1976 pp. 167-186); John Boulton Smith: *Frederick Delius and Edvard Munch* (A. Eggum and S. Bjørnstad (eds.) in *Frederick Delius og Edvard Munch* (Munch Museum,. Oslo 1979 pp. 9-28), and Lionel Carley: *Grieg and Delius A Chronicle of their Friendship in Letters* (Marion Boyars 1993).

[3] Quoted in Carley: *Grieg and Delius*, op. cit., p. 31.

[4] The lithographs are reproduced, for example, in L. Carley and R. Threlfall: *Delius. A Life in Pictures* pp. 75, 76 (Oxford 1977).

[5] Boulton Smith, op. cit., p. 27.

[6] See, for example, Lionel Carley: *Frederick Delius: A Short Biography*, p 2 (London 1992).

[7] Letter 14 June 1889, quoted in Gunnar Rugstad: *Christian Sinding – Frederick Delius: A Friendly Counterpoint* p. 108 (Lionel Carley (ed.): *Frederick Delius: Music, Art and Literature*. Aldershot 1998).

[8] See Carley: *Grieg and Delius*, op. cit., p. 87ff.

[9] Letter 19 October 1888, quoted in Carley: *Grieg and Delius*, op. cit., p. 59.

[10] Three photographs of the cottage are reproduced in Carley and Threlfall, op. cit., p 77.

[11] The trip is mentioned in Eric Fenby's book *Delius as I knew him*, p 74f (London 1981).

[12] Delius played this piece at Edvard Grieg's Christmas Eve party in Leipzig in 1887. It later emerged as the orchestral piece *Winter Night* or *Sleigh Ride* (1889-90).

[13] Carl Dahlhaus: *Nineteenth-Century Music*, transl. by J. Bradford Robinson, p 306 (Berkeley 1989).

[14] Christopher Palmer: *Delius: Portrait of a Cosmopolitan*, pp. 48ff. (New York 1976).

[15] Carley: *Grieg and Delius*, op. cit. p. 15.

Delius's Cottage

FRED. DELIUS

DAS LIED VON DEN HOHEN BERGEN
THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

PARTITUR

UNIVERSAL-EDITION

Nr. 7016

THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

ORIGINS AND FIRST PERFORMANCES – AND SOME PUZZLES

Martin Lee-Browne

In the autumn of 1886, at the age of 24, Delius went to the Leipzig Conservatorium, and became friends with several Norwegian fellow students, including the young Christian Sinding. The following summer, 1887 - no doubt on their recommendation - he went alone on a walking holiday to Norway, which gave rise to his great love of the country. He kept a diary of his travels (which was found at Grez after his death) every day between 15 July and 18 August, and thereafter intermittently until 1 September. The countryside, his journeys, and his encounters with people are described in vivid detail, and it is clear that, even on that first acquaintance with Norway, he was completely bowled over by it.[1] Then, in the autumn of the same year, Sinding introduced him to Edvard Grieg, who was to become one of his greatest friends and one of the greatest influences on his life. That Christmas, Delius went to stay with the Griegs, and on Christmas Eve he played them and Sinding his piano piece *Norwegian Sleigh Ride*, which in due course became very popular in an orchestrated version, with 'Norwegian' dropped from the title[2]. By 1888, he had become so taken with Norway and its people that he wrote to Grieg:

> Do you know what I have in mind, 'please don't faint': to live in Norway. That is 8 months in the year & 4 months in Leipzig or Paris. When I come to Norway I will look out for a nice place where I can live and work in peace[3].

but, of course, his dream never came true. Nevertheless, he visited the country another six times, once for nearly three months, and always walking in the hills and mountains he had come to love so much. In 1906 Jelka, whom he had married in 1903, went with him and spent much of the time

painting – and in July and August 1908, he was there again, accompanied for part of the time by someone who would probably be thought of as one of the greatest non-walkers in all musical history, Thomas Beecham:

'Beecham is enjoying himself immensely, and the more I see of him the more I like him' wrote Delius to Jelka[4], and a fortnight later:

> It had rained all night - & our hut was swimming – It was a frightfully tough walk up the glacier. 5 hours almost as steep as a house - Beecham seemed quite done and faint & I thought we should have to turn back - he pulled together however very pluckily – I carried his knapsack & the guide carried mine - The walk over the glacier was grandiose & nothing but snow in sight & snow covered peaks – after we crossed the glacier we descended gradually into Mysahytta Saeter which was a frightful distance – We were 14 hours walking – with only a couple of sandwiches each – B could scarcely walk any more - we had to wade a stream which took me almost up to the waist….The view was again splendid. We are enjoying ourselves splendidly and feel in wonderful health and spirits. [5]

Delius was by now thoroughly steeped in the Norwegian countryside, its people and its literature. 'The effect of the scenic wonders of Norway was little short of cataclysmic on a youth who had felt intuitively, in the vastness and remoteness of the West Riding moors, that he might 'do something unusual' with his life. Here for the first time his affinity with high, wild and lonely places, 'the wide far distance, the great solitude' was made manifest.'[6]

Very little is known about Delius's composing methods; he rarely wrote more than a few words about any of his works in embryo, and many of his drafts or sketches no longer exist. There are, however, letters written throughout his lifetime in which he briefly mentions what he was working on at the time. The first reference to what was eventually to become *The Song of the High Hills* ('*The Song*') is in a letter of 4 December 1911, when Delius wrote to his young friend Philip Heseltine[7] (then only 17): 'I am working on a new choral work'. Although his great love of Norway must have been the spur, there is no evidence as to what actually decided him

to write the piece. Christopher Palmer believed that the seeds were sown when he and Jelka went to Grieg's funeral in 1907[8] - but many years later, however, Percy Grainger claimed that:

> for all his 17 mountaineering trips to Norway it did not occur to him to write a work about the hills until he had heard my two *Hill Songs*, the first written 1901-1902, the second 1901-1907. The Song of the High Hills was written around 1912.[9]

Given the fact that the two composers were great friends, that is a little surprising. In another letter to Heseltine, dated 11 February 1912, Delius said: 'I have been very busy with a new work'. On 12 March, however, the Deliuses set off for Berlin, Munich, Venice, returning via Munich to try to resolve a major difficulty with his publishers, Harmonie, which resulted in a change to Universal Edition; some five or six weeks later they were back at Grez, where Delius continued with the new work. He was a trifle more specific about it in writing to Granville Bantock (who had performed *Appalachia* on 25 January with the Hallé) on 10 June: 'I am at work on a new work Chorus & Orchestra'.

Whenever Delius could not make progress on a particular work, he would put it aside, and only start on it again when 'interest or inspiration' returned, which was sometimes not for a very long time. Many years later, however, Fenby recollected what Delius had told him about the difficulties he had with *The Song*, and how in particular 'the eight-part chorus that wouldn't come right'; but it was in fact 'the only work on which he had never been able to stop working. His absorption in the piece was, it seems, virtually complete from start to finish…..All the evidence points to it having been completed in the summer of 1912. It was certainly 'far advanced' when Delius wrote to Heseltine in June'.[10]

There are two extant sets of sketches for *The Song*, one in the Delius Trust archive, and the other (24 pages of early annotations) at the Grainger Museum in Melbourne; part of the former is headed *Symphonie*, and various drafts had the titles *Poem of the Mountains*, *Song of the Mountains* and *The Song of the Mountains*. At some stage (exactly when is unknown, but almost certainly towards the end of 1913) Delius asked Balfour Gardiner[11] - whom he had first met in April 1907, and who became perhaps his greatest friend – to correct the proofs (from the Leipzig printers,

HILL-SONG. No I
Dedicated for 2 pianos
Piano I.
1
5
10
15
20
25
30
mf
f
mp
sf
ff
mf marked
marked & short

Philip Heseltine in 1915

F E C Leuckart). Only one set of them is known to exist now - and it came to light a few years ago, in the middle of a pile of full scores that had belonged to my uncle Richard Austin (1903-1989). He was something of a protégé of Gardiner's – who, among numerous other expressions of generosity to many musicians, gave him and his wife-to-be a cottage next door to his own at Ashampstead in Berkshire as a wedding present – and it seems beyond doubt that at some stage Gardiner gave him the set of proofs as well. The 'Austin copy is a fascinating document, not so much because of its provenance, but because it contains intriguing puzzles, some of which I have been able (with great excitement, and help from a number of knowledgeable friends) to solve – while the answers to the others may never be known.

The first mention of the work by name was at the end of 1913, immediately after Heseltine had been persuaded by Gardiner (no doubt with little difficulty!) to take over the correcting, and he (Heseltine) wrote to his friend Viva Smith:

> ….on Monday Balfour Gardiner came to tea with me and brought the proof sheets of a new orchestral and choral work of Delius, 'The Song of the High Hills'[12]

and exactly a month later he sent this to Delius:

> Dear Mr Delius
> I am returning the proof sheets of 'The Song of the High Hills' by this post, with many apologies for having kept them so long. It is very remiss of me not to have sent them back long ago, and I sincerely hope you have not been inconvenienced by their non-arrival. Gardiner brought them to me at Oxford,

> in order that I might copy your corrections into his copy of the score, [and]……I discovered what appeared to me a number of misprints still uncorrected, in your copy, so I retained it for further examination and made out a list of the apparent misprints. Some of them, of course, may be merely my own mistakes, but some are obvious printer's errors, and I hope that, in spite of the delay, you will be spared the trouble of going through the score again. I have not marked these misprints in your score, save here and there with a query; but I enclose a list of them, so that you may see for yourself what they are……..If you want the proofs of the orchestral parts corrected, I should only be too pleased to save you the trouble of doing them yourself, if you think I am competant [sic] to do them for you.[13]

Soon after Christmas, he wrote another letter to the composer, which finished:

> Over the page I am copying a further list of 'queries', with regard to misprints in the score of the 'Song of the High Hills'.
> Goodbye now, for the present, with much love.[14]

to which Delius replied:

> All the corrections you sent me of 'Song of the High Hills' were right — It is wonderful how one oversees mistakes — you seem to have an eagle eye! You are doing me a great service by correcting the Score & parts of this work - I will send you more parts as soon as I receive them…..[15]

Almost every one of the 50 pages has corrections, most of them in two quite distinct hands – one thin and spidery, and the other thick and bold. Not knowing when I found the 'Austin copy' either that Heseltine had written to Delius in those two letters listing his 'queries about misprints in the score', or how many sets of the proofs there were, one day I happened to be reading Barry Smith's *Frederick Delius and Peter Warlock: A Friendship*

PAGE	BAR	INSTRUMENT	CORRECTION
5.		Bassoon 3.	𝄢 and *not* 𝄡
7.	4	Flute 1.	B♮
		Clarinet 1.	F♮
	3 bar	Oboe 1	♮ before F.
9.		Horns 1. 2.	𝄞
	last	Violas	A♮
11.	3	Bassoon 3.	𝄢
14.	2 (2nd line)	Celesta	F♮
19.		"Cymbals" (not "Cimb")	
16.	5	Cellos.	C and G. *dotted* semibreves
17.	last	Cellos 2.	D♮
	5th	Flute 1.	A♮ minim: *not* dotted minim
24.	6	Bassoons 2.	F♮
	6	Clarinet 2.	𝅘𝅥𝅮𝅘𝅥𝅯 C♯
25.	4	Violas 2.	G *not* A
34.	6	Tenor solo.	B♮ dotted?
30.	3	Oboe 1.	B♮. ♯ sh[d] be noted.
page. 46.	'not hurried'		two words
50.		Cellos.	Tie missing (or if not D♯ sh[d] be noted)
		Violas 1.	𝄞 clef
50	Bar 4 after (40) next bar but two. (four bars later, the same)	Violas 1.	G♯
		Violins 2.	G♯

Heseltine's first list of queries

page	bar.	instrument.	
6	3	Flute 2.	last note of triplet B♭?
8	5	Horn 2.	last note but one sh[d] be A♮
9	last	Violin	third note of bar, A♮?
21	2	Horn 5.	second note of bar, B♭?
46	1 of 2[nd] line	Contralto. 1	tie to F♯ (minim) omitted
47	1	Tenor. 2.	last note but one of bar sh[d] be F♮
"	5	Viola	3[rd] crotchet of bar. C♯?
"	6	𝄢 is a misprint for 𝄡	
"	4	Oboe 2	first quaver on second beat sh[d] be G♯?
"	6	Trombone 1	second note of bar sh[d] be B♮ and last note G♮
137)			also, why has the A (quaver) two tails? Does the 1[st] trombone play in unison with the 2[nd], 4[th] and 6[th] Horns? It looks as if the printers had muddled the whole bar: I cannot make anything of it.
"	6	Trombone 2.	last note but one of the bar. E♭?
"	4	Bassoon 1.	first note of the bar Should bassoon 1 play C? There is no other C in the harmony.
page 48.	bar 2	Horn 1.	minim sh[d] be dotted
page 49.	bar 3	Violas.	D sh[d] be dotted
page 50.	bar 4.	Violas.	𝄡 clef at bar 4, and G♯??
page 37.	bar 2.	Violas	Minim. D♭?
"	"	English Horn	Minim. F♮?
"	6	Horn 5	Does it play in unison with Horn 3, C♯, or should the C♮ be dotted? There should be either a note, dot or rest added.
page 41.	bar 10.	Horn 2.	F♯

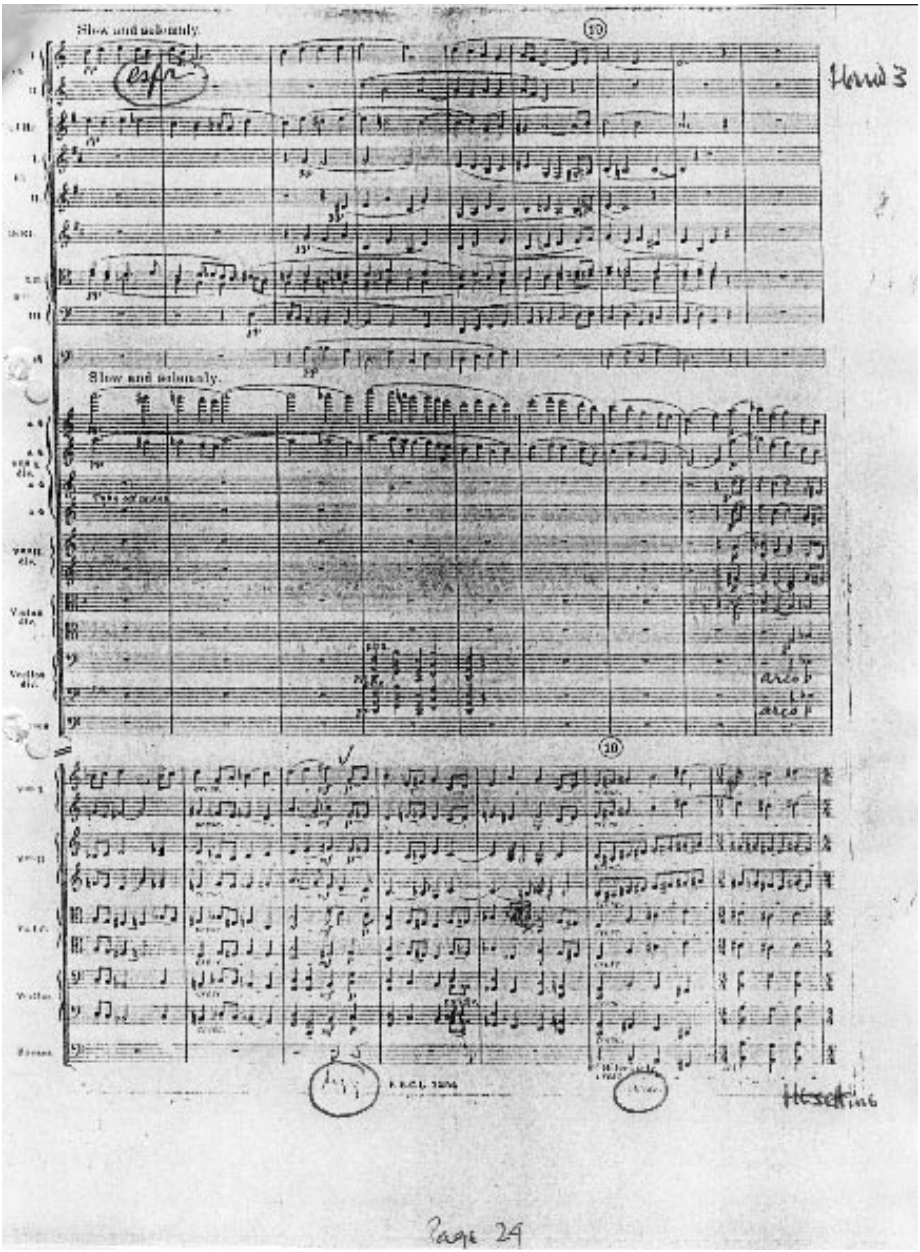
p. 43 bar 2 D♯ English Horn Bassoons a [illegible] changing to [illegible] 4th bar last bar but 3 on this page, 3[rd] note A♮?

Heseltine's second list of queries

Aufführungsrecht vorbehalten.
The Song of the High Hills.
Frederick Delius. 1911.
With quiet easy movement.
3 Flutes.
2 Oboes.
English Horn.
3 Klarinets.
3 Bassoons.
Contra
2 Horns in F
Kettle drums
With quiet easy movement.
Violins
Violas
Violoncellos
Basses
Page 3 [Printed].

With Vigor
Hands
?
"Sing it"
all Hesitation
go ahead
Cortés
With Vigor
go ahead
Hands
?
Page 10

11
Fl.
Ob. I.II.
Engl. Hr.
Cl.
B Cl.
Bsn.
Contrab.
Hrn. III. IV.
V. VI.
Trp.
Trb.
Tb.
Vln.
Vla.
Vlc.
Cb.
Klaus
B
Cres
Cres
Pizz
Pizz
Page 11


Slow and solemnly.
Hand 3
Slow and solemnly.
arco
arco
Page 24

All Breathe
poco rit.

in Letters[16] and I realised at once that the thin and spidery writing is, as Malcolm Rudland has confirmed[17], undoubtedly Heseltine's. Page 37[18] is the most corrected of them all, and that page, as well as the lists from both letters are reproduced here. It was also clear from the first of those two letters that there were then two sets of the proof sheets. The phrase 'your corrections' in line 5 of the letter must mean the corrections made by Delius on one set, which he had at Grez, and because the corrections on the 'Austin copy' were in Heseltine's writing, it must therefore be 'his [Gardiner's] copy of the score'. Almost all of Heseltine's corrections were incorporated into the printed full score, although a number of further uncorrected errors in the first two published editions persisted until the work was published as part the Collected Edition in 1986 – and, as is mentioned below, Heseltine also corrected the parts as well[19].

The thick handwriting proved relatively easy to identify. It is clearly that of a conductor, for performance purposes – and the first performance of *The Song* was conducted by Albert Coates[20] on 26 February 1920. The Coates archive is held by the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, and they have confirmed[21] that those markings are indeed in his hand. He therefore presumably used it for that performance - but why? As mentioned below, Gardiner became very heavily involved in the affairs of the Royal Philharmonic Society [RPS], and as Coates regularly conducted its concerts, they would undoubtedly have got to know each other. Although '1911' appears on page 3 of the score underneath the composer's name, the work was not in fact published then, but sometime between about 1915 and 1920, by Leuckart in Leipzig - although exactly when is in

doubt. Assuming that the score and parts were printed during the Great War, it would probably not have been possible to send copies of them to England then, but it would be somewhat curious if they were not available here two years after its end. The only conclusion is that Coates had simply borrowed Gardiner's copy. Coates's markings can be seen on page 10 ('go ahead' across bars 1 & 2) and page 11 (in the trombone and tuba parts), and others appear on nearly every page.

So far, so good!. On page 3 (the first actual page of music), however, what seems to be a third hand ('Hand 3') makes its first appearance -'trem' in faded red ink in bar 5,'then go ahead' across bars 2 & 3, and'espress' in the flute part in bar 4 of page 10 are all in the same writing – and the first and third of those markings were incorporated in the published full score. On page 10, the correction in the flute part in bar 1 is Heseltine's hand, as is'singing' five times in bar 4 - but the'a2' for the oboes in bar 4 definitely does not look like his writing To add to the conundrum, also on page 10, in the trumpet part in bar 4, is a conductor's marking in a totally different writing ('Hand 4'), and there are a number of other markings in the same hand on other pages. 'Hand 3' can be seen again at the top of page 24 – but 'pizz' and 'arco' in the bottom margin look as though they were by Heseltine. Then, most interestingly, on page 32 there is a note 'Horns echo with muted horns', and the very unusual 'H' (with the bottom of the right-hand 'leg' connected to the left-hand end of the cross-bar) could very well be Gardiner's writing. Gardiner had hoped to include the work in a third series of his concerts in 1914, but the idea had to be abandoned because of the War; if, though, those five words were indeed his, why did he not make any other markings anywhere in the score? Then again, in the bassoon part on page 5 the tenor clef in bar 1 is definitely Heseltine's (cf. the marginal note on page 37), but that in the next bar isn't, and the third one, in the margin seems to be in another hand still:

Yet a further curiosity is the fact that on page 1 the 1st violin part (part of which is also reproduced here) 'trem' is almost certainly in 'Hand 3' as well. That copy is from the original set of parts published by Leuckart, and when Delius transferred the work to Universal Edition they produced a revised set of parts in which that 'trem' was incorporated.

So to whom did 'Hand 3' and 'Hand 4' belong? It is just possible that 'Hand 3', only with performance markings, is that of Charles Kennedy Scott[22], who was a very good friend of Gardiner's, and who conducted the work on several occasions; it seems relatively unlikely, however, that he would have seen the score (and certainly not the orchestral parts) appreciably earlier than 1919 or 1920, when he started preparing the chorus for the first performance (see below). None of the markings can be Beecham's, for he did not do *The Song* until 1936 – perhaps he disdained it in revenge for his harrowing experiences with Delius in Norway in 1908! - and the same applies to Richard Austin, who could not have conducted it before 1934, when he was appointed to the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra (as it then was). The identity of 'Hand 3' and 'Hand 4' must therefore remain a mystery, although hopefully not for ever.

Notwithstanding the 'H' referred to above (which could be either a proof correction or a conductor's marking, it seems unlikely that Gardiner did much, if any, correcting of the proofs himself - but Grainger remembered that:[23]

> Gardiner kept asking about a kettle-drum passage . . . in which the kettle-drummer, with only 4 drums, was required to play *5* different notes and with no time to tune between them. Gardiner insisted that the passage, as printed, could not be played. But all he got out of Delius was: 'I don't know how he plays them; I only know he *does* play them.' Gardiner was disconsolate: 'The trouble is that the drummer does *not* play the 5th note, but Fred never notices it.

As Stephen Lloyd has pointed out,[24] there was some justifiable confusion on Gardiner's part, for, while there are three staves for the timpani on pages 16, 18, 19, 28,33-35, 40-41 and 50 of the full score, the list of instruments on (the unnumbered) page 2 specifies only '4 Pauken mit 2 Spielen'. However, Jelka Delius wrote to Grainger on 4 April 1924 saying

that 'Fred wants me to tell you - the score of S. of H.H. only *two* drummers are marked - But that is a mistake, there ought to be *3.…*'

One more interesting little correction is on page 3. The 'Austin copy' was badly torn on the first two pages of music, but they have recently been repaired, using enlarged photocopies taken from the Universal-Edition study-score printed on matching paper, and the whole 'book' rebound; the illustration with this article is of the repaired page 3, and it can just be seen that, whilst on the original proof Delius's christian name was printed in German –'Friede…' – (and despite the fact that, apart from the English sub-title, the full-score is in German) it was corrected to 'Frederick' in the published score.

At the end of the Great War, there were only three large choirs in London - the Royal Choral Society (founded in 1871), the Bach Choir (1875) and the London Choral Society (1903) - and the repertoires of the first two were largely based on the big works of Bach, Beethoven, Verdi and Dvo□ák. The London Choral Society took part in two of Balfour Gardiner's famous series of eight concerts of (almost exclusively[25]) new English music in 1912 and 1913, when they sang extremely well, but there was nevertheless a need for a second big chorus prepared to tackle contemporary music. Almost certainly, the best of the other, smaller, choirs was the Oriana Madrigal Society, formed by Kennedy Scott in 1905 – who, by 1920, had become the doyen of the English choir trainers.

Balfour Gardiner c. 1930s-1940s

Gardiner became associated with the Royal Philharmonic Society (RPS) in 1918, as a guarantor for the then enormous sum of £1,200 (equivalent to some £45,000 today). He in fact paid out considerable amounts to cover its deficits in subsequent years, and could with justification write to

Grainger:

> I have a certain influence with the Philharmonic now …...We are thinking about the formation of a Philharmonic Choir too in conjunction with the Philharmonic concerts & hope to put in at least one of your works.[26]

and three months later he told Grainger's mother, Rose, that:

> I see a good bit of Kennedy Scott: as well as the Oriana, he is taking on the new Philharmonic Choir which I am supporting, and tomorrow, when I go to town, I shall hear how the Choir is forming. I hope it will be a good one.

Not surprisingly, Oriana (as it had become known) was indeed the nucleus from which Kennedy Scott did formed the 300-strong new Choir, primarily for RPS performances of large works in Queen's Hall. It was a mix of amateurs and professionals — a good many of the latter not surprisingly being tenors — and in the first year Gardiner contributed £500 to the expenses:

> From the first, this far-seeing, generous friend of music was a strong supporter of Scott's, devoting his pecuniary resources to bring forward the music in which he believed — that of his own countrymen. Delius, Holst, Bax, [Benjamin] Dale, Grainger and many others owed much to him, and his help enabled Scott to realise many of his dearest dreams. Gardiner was a prime mover in the foundation of the Philharmonic Choir, which, indeed, he personally made financially possible.[27]

Charles Kennedy Scott

The Song had to wait for eight years to be heard, and it was, of course, the Philharmonic Choir, making its first public appearance, that gave the first performance, under Coates on 26 February 1920. The composer Norman O'Neill had been elected as a member and an honorary director of the RPS in 1913, and became its treasurer in 1918. He undertook many responsibilities in connection with the Society's activities, and was fully involved in the preparations for that performance. Delius wrote to him:

> I have just received a letter from F.E.C.Leuckart, Salomon Str.9, Leipsic [sic], asking me how many Doublier Stimmen Orchestral Parts and how many Choral Parts will be required for the London performance of the Song of the High Hills [sic]. Please answer direct to Leuckart and at once in order to save time. I think the later the performance takes part the better…. I am having the Full Score of the Song of the High Hills sent direct to Coates, whom I saw before leaving London.[28]

and at Coates's request he described the work for the programme note:

> I want the note on The Song of the h. hills [sic] to be as short and simple as possible. I have tried to express the joy and exhilaration one feels in the mountains, and also the melancholy of the higher solitudes, and the grandeur of the wide, far distances. The human voices represent Man in Nature – an episode which becomes fainter and disappears altogether. This is very badly put & must not figure in the programme as it is – perhaps you can word it better. You know what I mean.[29]

At the concert, Kennedy Scott conducted the first item, a Bach motet, and Coates the rest of the programme, which consisted of *The Song* and then Beethoven's Choral Symphony. The next day, *The Times* carried this report:

> ….and the first concert in which the choir took part will be an important landmark in the venerable [RPS's] career. In the Bach motet the choir showed itself fully worthy of the position it is to occupy. The singing was extraordinarily alert

> and full of rhythmic energy, each part clearly distinguished, and almost every word easily audible……..Mr Delius's new work is for orchestra with the addition of chorus. There are no words: for some time the voices only enter into the texture at intervals like extra instruments, but there is a noble climax to which the voices come well into the foreground. The prolonged singing without words always seems an unnatural business, and the effect of the thing struck us as a laborious attempt to maintain a mood of exaltation. As in certain other works of Delius, one is enchanted by the atmosphere and rare colouring at the outset; later one longs for a change of mood, which does not come. But, after all, that is a matter of personal preference. Some never weary of the snow-clad peaks; others soon long for the trees and the flowers of the valleys. There is also such a thing as mountain sickness. Nevertheless, there is fine music in every part of the work, which was received with acclamation, the composer coming onto the platform repeatedly to acknowledge the applause.[30]

Delius had come over from Grez for the concert**,** staying with O'Neill and his wife Adine at 4 Pembroke Villas in Kensington, and was clearly impressed with 'that lovely Kennedy Scott chorus'.[31] He said that he wanted to hear them sing the *Mass of Life* before he died, even if, as he put it, 'it meant ending up in an urn at Golder's Green'.[32] Declining health in fact prevented him from hearing many other performances of his works, including the *Mass* under Paul von Klenau[33] in 1925 and Kennedy Scott in 1928. But his wish was fulfilled when he was persuaded to cross from France again for the 1929 Festival of his music, of which the fitting climax, on 1 November, was a marvellous performance of the *Mass* conducted by Beecham with four admirable soloists, the Philharmonic Choir and the BBC Symphony Orchestra. The Choir, again under Coates, repeated *The Song* on 2 June 1920, together with a repeat (by public request) of Holst's *Hymn of Jesus*, the first performance of which they had also given in their second concert on 25 March, and the following day *The Times* said:

> The Philharmonic Choir and the Philharmonic Orchestra, two distinct bodies, combined last night to give us Holst's Hymn

of Jesus, Delius's The Song of the High Hills and the Ninth Symphony. The short solos in the Delius were sung by Miss Maud Wilby and Mr Norman Stone…..Mr Holst conducted his own work, and Mr Coates the others.

It must be said at once that these three works were a severe test for the choir, and that they came through it in triumph. The choral work in the Beethoven, at a very late hour, could hardly have been better done…

[Here followed a paragraph about The Hymn of Jesus]

Delius's work is in strange contrast. The music paints the rapture of contemplation that the mountaineer knows. But one asks oneself how far music can paint such a subject. Both music and poetry seem to demand action, either past or in immediate prospect, and to be able to expiate on only such feelings as arise in connection with this. Music does this, not by making noises like the actions hinted at, but by weaving its own motives in a semblance of cause and effect. In Delius the motives are there in plenty, but we are never allowed to look at them one at a time, and so we lose all sense of antecedence and consequence. The result is a gorgeous sensation like that of a lustrous spring day; we are very much alive, and dazzled by the splendour, but feel that we could enjoy it even more if we had something definite to do or think. Then comes the terrible wordless cry from the choir, which seems to take an unfair advantage of us, getting down among our heart strings, without letting us know whether it is ecstasy or pain, and we feel rather frightened amid all this splendour.

When Heseltine was correcting the proofs of the full-score at the end of 1913, Gardiner also asked him to make a piano duet arrangement, and he gladly agreed to do so. He wrote to Delius:

> I have still got Gardiner's copy of the score, from which I am making a piano arrangement: I started on a duet arrangement, and did about three quarters of the work, but I came to the conclusion that a literal transcription, even for four hands, was altogether too complex and too difficult

> to make effective, so I have begun again on a piano solo arrangement which, although it necessarily involves a good deal of omission, will I think be more effective and give a better general impression of the work than a very full and faithful transcription for piano duet. But please let me know exactly what you would like done, and what the publishers want, and I will do my best to arrange the work in any way you like.[34]

but in fact Heseltine also struggled with his solo-piano version:

> The Piano score of the'Song of the High Hills'is nearly finished, though I find it very difficult, and get on rather slowly. Still, I find it immensely interesting doing it. Would you like it written out with the chorus on separate lines (as in the piano score of *Appalachia*), or shall I transcribe the whole thing together? Also, as it is impossible to work in the quaver accompaniment to the melody beginning on page 7, shall I just transcribe the melody and harmonies for the wind, omitting the violin notes, or would it be better to *suggest* the quaver figures by arranging the harmonies for the left hand as arpeggios in quavers? I am afraid the semiquavers (pp 27-33) will have to be omitted altogether: otherwise I think I can make a fairly faithful, as well as playable arrangement.[35]

At the beginning of the new year, he sent a draft to Delius, who replied:

> In your piano score of the Song of the high hills [sic], the chorus parts must of course be on separate lines – When necessary 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 it on a 3rd line perhaps – you see the effect must be obtained some way or other – otherwise one gets the wrong impression of the work – the quavers are important….[36]

A month later, however, after further correspondence between them,

Delius was still not entirely happy:

> Your arrangement of the Song of the H.H. is wonderfully good in parts. You seem tho' to have hesitated between putting everything in & eliminating. For Gardiner I would put everything in & then afterwards make a playable 2 hand arrangement - I do not know much about piano arrangements but they must be playable & give a good idea of the work...[37]

but the task must have been finished to Delius's satisfaction soon after that, because towards the middle of February Heseltine asked Delius whether he thought that Leuckart would publish the two-hand arrangement.[38] Nevertheless, Heseltine seems to have worked on it for some years after that, because the manuscript copy owned by the Delius Trust is dated 1921; it was, however, never published.[39] It is unfortunately not possible to quote from all letters that passed between Heseltine and Delius dealing with the transcriptions, and any interested reader is recommended to go to Lionel Carley's and Barry Smith's marvellous books cited in the footnotes. (At some stage, Heseltine also produced a piano/vocal score, but it too was never published[40], and there is no evidence that it was the basis of the 'Chorparticell' which Universal published in 1919.

It was probably the combination of further 'popular demand', Gardiner's keeness to promote his friend's music as well as his financial generosity, Coates's love of the work, and the fact that the Philharmonic Choir sang it so well, that resulted in *The Song* having another performance – on 7 December 1922, again at a RPS concert and with the same forces as before. Some 'crits' of the concert – which are particularly interesting for their writers' thoughts on the work – are to be found elsewhere in the Journal.

Percy Grainger had much to do with *The Song.* He prepared the chorus for a performance to celebrate Delius's 61st birthday[41], conducted by Klenau, at Frankfurt on 1 March1923; 'It was beautiful', Jelka told Adine O'Neill[42] - although Grainger had not enjoyed the experience:

> The Rühlscher Gesangverein were as nasty to rehearse as a choral group could possibly be. They were poor readers, they talked all the time & I'm sure they hated the work….There

was one group of old ladies in the left back corner (second sopranos) that had a bit to themselves very soon after the chorus starts singing….and when the Jewish-Danish conductor from Vienna had his first rehearsal with the choir & came to the spot where my old ladies became vocally exposed, he took one hate-filled look in their direction, made a big wiping-out gesture & shouted 'Nicht mit-singen!' [Don't sing with us] [43]

In the same year, Delius was in correspondence with him about the possibility of performances of *The Song* in America - and on 28 April 1924 he conducted the American premiere, repeating it two days later, and he gave yet another performance in 1926. He made an arrangement for two pianos, of which Gardiner had one copy - and Gardiner asked Grainger for a second one, so that he and Kennedy Scott could play the work (as well as Grainger's two piano arrangement of the *Dance Rhapsody No 1*) to Delius when they visited him at Grez over Christmas in 1925:

I went over to Grez again at Christmas, taking with me Kennedy Scott. We worked for a couple of hours a day at the Song of the High Hills, the second piano part of which reached me in plenty of time... We gave old Fred two performances of it, & he was delighted. A further result of this arrangement of yours, you will be glad to hear, is that CKS, having had the advantage of studying & discussing it at Grez, gave a good performance of it in London a couple of weeks ago. The tempi were almost perfect: the

Percy Grainger c.1923

> chorus perfect, absolutely. The orchestra, on the other hand, left a certain amount to be desired: this is Kennedy Scott's weak point.[44]

Photocopy extracts from the manuscript of that arrangement owned by the Delius Trust have been used by Paul Guinery in his analysis of *The Song* which follows this article – sadly, it is not in Granger's hand, but the beautiful one of a contemporary copyist.

Two commentaries on *The Song* will serve to conclude this article. Sir Thomas Beecham wrote:

> *A* [sic] *Song of the High Hills* is the longest as well as his most impressive work written as a single movement. It is built on an heroic scale and the inspiration is on an exalted level throughout. It has also an austerity of manner that we have not encountered before, and which appears to be associated in the composer's mind with the emotions roused by the contemplation of great heights. The ascent of and descent from the High Hills is cunningly depicted in music of a totally different character from that which greets us when the summit has been attained, where we have a magical sequence of sounds and echoes, both vocal and instrumental, all culminating in a great burst of tone that seems to flood the entire landscape. The first entrance of the choir singing as softly as possible is surely a stroke of genius, and of its kind without equal, either in him or any other composer.[45]

and Eric Fenby:

> From his early friendship with Grieg, which dated from the 'eighties, till the time of his final affliction, Delius contrived whenever possible to spend his summers in Norway. This was his spiritual home where the best of his works were pondered, often through weeks of silence, to be realised later in France. Such was his tireless energy that, before he took a house there overlooking the Norwegian hills, he usually went alone, occasionally with his wife, and once with 'Mr' Beecham.

One year, his fiftieth, he was compelled to remain at Grez. The work he had on the stocks, *The Song of the High Hills,* was not going too well. Parts eluded his grasp, and one in particular, the wordless chorus, resisted his efforts for weeks. Eight years were to pass before the new piece was first performed by Albert Coates with the Philharmonic Choir at a concert of the Royal Philharmonic Society in London.

This vivid evocation of mountain scene belongs with *Summer night on the river, On hearing the first cuckoo in spring* and *North country sketches* [all *sic*.] to the last great period of instrumental music inspired by the contemplation of nature. It is the mood of landscape rather than its pictorial image that Delius seeks to evoke. If tonal structures can be the source of such insights, the attraction of Delius's music for those whose aesthetic awareness is not bounded completely by music is readily understood. In no other work does Delius convey the sense of 'wide open spaces' more imaginatively than in *The Song of the High Hills.* Through the use of his wordless chorus he extends the spiritual range of his forces and, one is tempted to think, fuses his orchestral and human voices in a blend of musical pantheism which, in this particular context, symbolises his vision in sound.

We set out with him in good heart till the pace slows before immensities of peak and cloud in the growing orchestral rapture of the hill-song. Then through cooler heights of mist and snow we climb to full sublimity. A myriad voices emerge from afar till the grandeur of nature is matched in song. The vision fades as the human voices are lost in the hills and are heard no more. We begin the descent the way we came, still musing on life and its mystery.[46]

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(Note: I am very grateful for help with this article from Stephanus Müller of The University of Stellenbosch and Malcolm Rudland; and for advice, as well as permission to quote from their work and/or to reproduce pictures, from Lionel Carley, Lewis Foreman, Lyndon Jenkins, Stephen Lloyd, and particularly Robert Threlfall).

Footnotes

[1] The diary is reproduced in Lionel Carley: *Delius: a Life in Letters* Vol 1, App.III.
[2] The latter was, by coincidence, given its first performance (with two other pieces making up *Three Small Tone Poems*) by the writer's uncle Richard Austin with the RPO in Central Hall, Westminster on 18/11/46.
[3] Letter FD to Grieg 19/10/1888 (in Carley *op.cit.*).
[4] Letter FD to JD 29/7/1908 (Carley *op.cit.*note on p.367)
[5] *Ibid*, 18/8/08.
[6] Christopher Palmer: Delius: *A Portrait of a Cosmopolitam* (Duckworth 1976, p.40)
[7] Philip Heseltine (aka Peter Warlock – 1894-1930), English composer and writer.
[8] Christopher Palmer *op.cit* p.44.
[9] Peter Warlock: *Delius* (Bodley Head, revised edition 1952, p.172 – section *About Delius* by Grainger).
[10] Lyndon Jenkins: Sleeve-note for Bo Holten's recording (Danacord DACOCD 592, 2002).
[11] Henry Balfour Gardiner (1877-1950), English composer and patron of music, who eventually grew tired of music and took to growing trees in Dorset.
[12] Letter 20/11/1912 (in Stephen Lloyd: *H Balfour Gardiner* (CUP 1984 p.106)).
[13] Letter PH to FD 20/12/1913 (in Barry Smith: *Frederick Delius and Peter Warlock: A Friendship Revealed* (OUP 2000)).
[14] Letter PH to FD 4/1/1914 (*ibid*.).
[15] Letter FD to PH 6/1/1914 (*ibid*).
[16] OUP 2000.
[17] In conversation with the writer 13/8/2005.
[18] The page numbers given here are the same as those in the full score and the photographically reduced study score published by Universal-Edition respectively in 1921 and 1923 from which the illustrations for this article were taken.
[19] Letters PH to FD 20/12/1913 and FD to PH 18/1/1914 (in Smith *op,cit.*).
[20] Albert Coates (1882-1953), English conductor and composer.
[21] E-mail to the writer 18/3/2005.
[22] Charles Kennedy Scott (1876-1965), English choral conductor.
[23] Stephen Lloyd *op.cit.*p.135.
[24] *Ibid.*p.135.
[25] The main exception was Tchaikovsky's Bb minor Piano Concerto with Percy Grainger as the soloist. Details of the programmes can be found in Lloyd *op.cit.* pp. 242-245.
[26] Letter 25/6/1919 (in Lewis Foreman*: From Parry to Britten: British Music in Letters 1900-1945* (Batsford 1987)
[27] Stainton de B Taylor [a member of the Choir for many years]: *Charles Kennedy Scott, The Musical Times* 92, (1951) p.493-4.
[28] Letter, FD to O'Neill 26/8/1919 (in Carley *op.cit.*).
[29] Letter FD to O'Neill 10/2/1920 (in Derek Hudson: *Norman O'Neill: a Life of Music* (Quality Press, 1945 p.69).
[30] *The Times* 27/2/1920.

[31] Letter FD to Norman O'Neill 22/8/1922 (in Hudson *op.cit.*p.71).
[32] Letter FD to Kennedy Scott 31/5/1928 (in Warlock *op.cit* p.169). He was referring to the large cemetry in North London.
[33] Paul von Klenau (1883-1946), Dutch conductor and composer who gave many performances of Delius's works.
[34] Letter PH to FD 20/12/1913 (in Smith *op.cit.*).
[35] Letter PH to FD 28/12/1913 (in Smith *op.cit.* – which as printed there is 11 pages long!).
[36] Letter FD to PH 2/1/1914 (in Carley *op.cit.* and Smith *op.cit .).*
[37] Letter FD to PH 18/1/1914 (*ibid.*).
[38] Letter PH to FD 11/2/1914 (in Smith *op.cit.*).
[39] Robert Threlfall: *A Catalogue of the Compositions of Frederick Delius* (Delius Trust 1977, p.67).
[40] Threlfall *op.cit, ibid.*
[41] Everyone, including Delius and Jelka, actually thought it was his 60th .
[42] Letter JD to Adine O'Neill 30/3/1923 (in Carley *op.cit*.).
[43] Grainger's'Anecdotes'.
[44] Letter, Gardiner to Grainger 20/3/1926 (in Lloyd *op.cit*. p.136).
[45] Sir Thomas Beecham: *Frederick Delius* (Hutchinson 1959 p.168).
[46] Ed. Stephen Lloyd: *Fenby on Delius* (Thames Publishing 1996 p.184).

THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

A MUSICAL ANALYSIS

Paul Guinery

I'm aware that only too often a piece of written musical analysis can end up being unwieldy and, at worst, downright confusing. Some examples of the kind display a greater resemblance to mathematics than they do to music. So I've tried to make this analysis readable rather than academic. But I doubt if I've totally succeeded, so for ease of reference I've included a summary of the work's structure, as I see it, in table form at the very end.

I'd also like to point out that what follows is in no way intended to be a *definitive* analysis of *The Song of the High Hills*. This is not a work that can be poured into a pre-shaped mould. As usual, Delius goes his own way in what is essentially a 'rhapsodic' symphonic poem which follows its own course and creates its own form as it goes. Delius's critics, those dogged pursuers of trees rather than woods, have so tediously maintained that his music "meanders", aimlessly. I wonder if they could point to any great rivers that flow in a straight line? At any rate they will be disappointed to know that *The Song of the High Hills* does, to my mind, have a cogent, effective structure that holds together on paper as well as on the ear. I see it falling clearly into various sections which are not only admirably proportioned, but which trace a coherent overall journey. That ground-plan is how I myself have come to hear the work; but it's only my interpretation and others may experience it differently.

Some analysts are very good at finding "organic growth" in a piece of music, especially when it comes to relating various themes to each other. Such commentators tend to pounce on intervals (not the concert-going variety) with glee and alacrity, finding a minor third or whatever in the 1st subject "echoed" in a minor third in the 2nd etc. etc. I'm very wary of this approach, I must say. I simply feel that Delius, like any other composer, has his favourite stylistic outlines when he conceives melodic lines and that's really as far as it goes for me. So I'm afraid that I haven't been able to show that the whole of *The Song of the High Hills* is derived from its opening four bars – or anything of the sort. If you've always thought that,

then please read no further.

Let's have a look at the scoring first of all, which is typically Delian in its expansiveness: 3 flutes (the 3rd doubling piccolo); 2 oboes; cor anglais; 3 clarinets; bass clarinet; 3 bassoons; sarrusophone; 6 horns; 3 trumpets; 3 tenor trombones; bass tuba; timpani (3 separate players are required, something Delius was insistent on); bass drum; cymbals; glockenspiel; celesta; 2 harps; and strings. There's also sparing (but imaginative) use made of a double chorus with occasional solo writing for a soprano and tenor. The role of the chorus is really that of an supplementary 'wind band: they're additional members of the orchestra with voices for instruments. They're given no words but are requested to "sing on the vowel which will produce the richest tone possible."

A word or two about the sarrusophone: this is a rare visitor to the symphony orchestra though a magnificent one to behold (there's a lot of shiny plumbing involved). It's a large double-reed wind instrument of brass, invented in the 1860s by Sarrus, a bandmaster in the French army. Saint-Saëns and Massenet toyed with it, but it didn't catch on except in military bands. If a passing sarrusophone can't be hailed, then a double bassoon is an acceptable substitute.

For the musical examples which follow, I've used Percy Grainger's (unpublished) arrangement for two pianos which he made in 1923, as it's an effective way of showing this complex work in 'short score'. References to "figures" are to the rehearsal numbers in the current Universal edition of the full score, edited by Beecham and prepared for publication by Robert Threlfall in 1985 as volume 11B of the Complete Works. As a form of shorthand, "Fig. 17+7", for example, means the seventh bar after figure 17, counting 17 itself as bar 1.

My conception of *The Song of the High Hills* is a work in three main sections, each of them further subdivided: an arch-like structure in which the central keystone is an extended outpouring of essentially slow-moving music. It's the longest section of the work and "the heart of the matter", a paragraph signalled as such by Delius in the score with these potent words: *The Wide Far Distance – The Great Solitude*. That, then, is the second main section; approaching that vista – and retreating from it at a slightly swifter pace – forms the itinerary of the first and third sections.

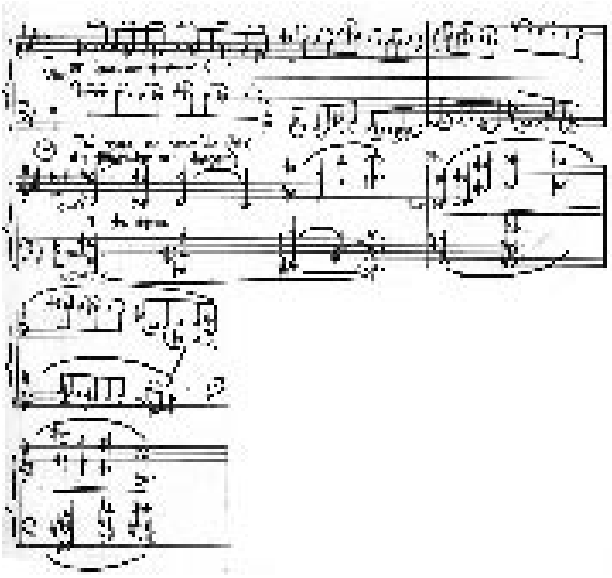
The journey to the High Hills begins with one of Delius's most arresting openings: the first violins have descending phrases of semitones and

whole tones underpinned by clarinets and horns, like cries of grief (Ex.1x) with little upward flurries in reply from the violas, pointed by cor anglais and bassoons (Ex.1y):

Ex. 1

The "narrow" intervals of Ex.1x will come to form an important feature of this opening section. They're soon prominent at Fig.2, linking up in chains of quavers – sometimes falling, sometimes rising – to underpin much of the material and give the music a sense of movement whilst propelling it onwards. After the first outburst by the full orchestra a few bars after Fig. 3, they crop up, for example, in the violins, underscoring the introduction by flute and clarinet at Fig.4 of a freshly soaring melodic idea:

Ex. 2



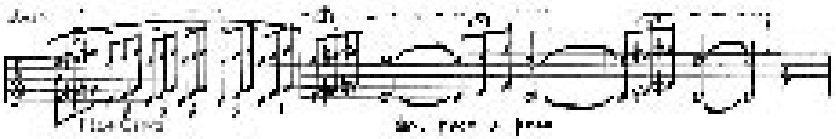
Notice that we've swiftly moved from the bleakness of G minor at the start of the work, to the warmth of E major though it would be misguided to think too hard about "key centres". In the sort of highly chromatic, constantly shifting harmonic language that Delius speaks, he rarely pauses in one key for very long. As we'll see later, there are key centres established for some sections of the score but I don't, on the whole, find that Delius in this particular work uses keys in the sense that a pre-Wagnerian composer might traditionally have done: that's to say, as an essential part of structure and form.

Both the constituent parts of Ex.2 ebb and flow, regulated by explicit markings such as "more strenuously", "rather quieter", "hold back", "with vigour". The woodwind has all the interest at first but at Fig.4+9 the roles are swopped around, with the strings "singing" the tune (as the score says) while the flutes, and then the clarinets, take up the chains of quavers. The six horns start to have their say in the texture as it builds to a great *tutti* climax at Fig.6+9 ("with vigour") when a virile new idea in C major, again marked "singing" (this is, for sure, one of the "songs" of the High Hills) erupts from the woodwind:

Ex. 3

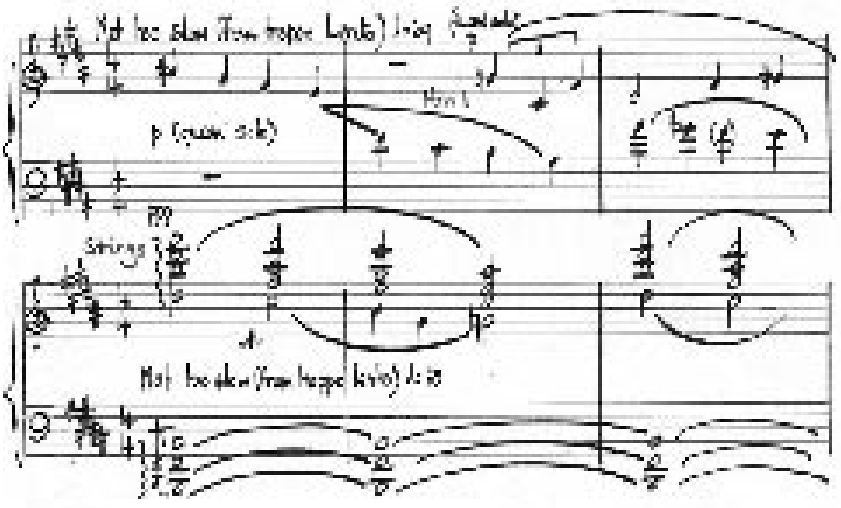
This is fiercely contrapuntal, as well as sensual, music: Ex.3x is strongly outlined in bassoons and lower strings, and shortly afterwards in trombones, thrusting upwards against the quaver lines as the music reaches full-throttle ("as *forte* as possible") (Fig.7+8). One bar after the climax, a repeated triplet figure is heard high up in flutes and clarinets and this rhythmically prefigures the extended slow interlude that's about to unfold in this opening section.

Ex. 4



As is so characteristic with Delius in his large orchestral scores, the music collapses in on itself as suddenly as it had reared up. (Richard Strauss also knew how to bring this trick off). In fewer than a dozen bars we go from triple *forte* to triple *piano* – and that's all the preparation there is, before we embark on a series of magical pages ushered in by a solo for the third horn with the first horn echoing it, cushioned by a sustaining bed of strings in the tonal centre of B major:

Ex. 5



The horns continue calling to each other as if across a valley whilst flutes and clarinets decorate the duet with the rhythm of the triplet figure of Ex.4 with additional colouring at Fig.10 from the celesta, pointing the chords of the now richly divided strings whilst the harps touch in a series of feather-light upward brush-strokes. We might well be back with Zarathustra "on the mountains" at the beginning of Part Two of *A Mass of Life.* This is Delius the master orchestrator.

Even finer effects are in store as the music suddenly turns a corner into C major at Fig.11 with the strings still *molto divisi*. The abrupt change of key is like a sudden splash of cold water from a mountain stream: after all the rich harmonies we've heard, a refreshingly pure modal flavour now

infuses the writing as all six horns call to each other. I feel the shadow of Vaughan Williams falling momentarily across the score though I know this can only be coincidental. Soon this interlude is over and, as the textures begin to build again, the harmony reverts to pure Delius in its chromaticism. The biggest *crescendo* of the work so far reaches its peak at Fig.15+9 with an exhilarating *tutti* passage marked "with exultation":

Ex. 6

Again, the descent from this moment of ecstasy is swift: a mere half-dozen bars is enough to deflate it and round off the opening section of the score. Although this is emphatically not another Straussian *Alpine Symphony*, is it, I wonder, all that fanciful to suggest that we've climbed up and up through misty valleys and that the "exultation" comes when we're suddenly through the clouds and "on top of the world", vouchsafed our first undisturbed view of that "wide far distance – the great solitude."

We've reached the central section of *The Song of the High Hills* and now (at Fig.17+7) the violins, violas and cellos are each divided into four parts, the only other sounds being those of a remote horn and the wordless chorus, with the tenors the first to emerge imperceptibly from the texture. In an ideal performance we should hardly even realise they're singing: Delius requests them "to sound as if in the far distance." Muted violins hint at a new melody which is elaborated a few bars later by the woodwind "slowly and solemnly" in a beautiful, chorale-like harmonization:

Ex. 7

An equally yearning and eloquent motif emerges from the 1st violins:

Ex. 8

This central episode of the work can be thought of as in four sections; now, in the first of these, the strings continue with an answering second-half to the "chorale" which opens out the texture a little. But it soon thins again for a passage of magical stillness which echoes the one earlier at Fig.10. Again, the orchestration is minimal but highly effective, including divided strings with celesta "pointing" their slowly undulating chords; a harp touching in a sequence of upward runs in the first half of the bar; two timpani rumbling faintly; and a group of distant tenors (no more than six, says the composer) sketching in a brief, modal scale shown in Ex.9 alongside two motifs with complementary outlines that occur instrumentally a little later:

Ex. 9

A truly extraordinary passage now follows with a timbre all its own: the emotional heart perhaps of this"great solitude". For me, the orchestration of this second section, extending from Fig. 23+4 until 27+6, recalls the mood of certain pages of *North Country Sketches* in its stark textures. The violins, divided into four parts and placed mostly high up in their register, give out a continuous stream of rustling semiquavers for some thirty consecutive bars with not a single dynamic change indicated after the initial *pianissimo*. Against this eerie backdrop, Delius focuses in on the 1st oboe and gives it a rather melancholy, modal tune hovering between D minor and A minor and infused with triplets working against the groups of quadruplets in the strings. The instrument is placed high up in its register, where the atmosphere is thinnest and the sound correspondingly plangent:

Ex. 10

Cellos and double basses softly add in Ex.9y and then a cor anglais joins the oboe, at first in imitation and then in unison at the octave below. Meanwhile, the lower strings, aided here and there by horns and bassoons, sustain a slow-moving chromaticism, gradually melting the frostiness and edging us closer towards less chilly harmonies. Ex.9y makes its presence

felt again at Fig.26+3, this time in augmentation in bass clarinet, bassoons and bass tuba; then some of the voices join the texture, but quadruple *piano* and marked as "a sigh" so that we would hardly know they're there. Delius holds his celesta and harp back until Fig.26+7; a less sure hand might have mingled them earlier with the violin semiquavers but Delius knows exactly what he wants: that string sound on its own is a particular effect. As the music slows down and dies away, it resolves into the warmer feel of F major as the three timpani purr gently and Ex. 9z can just be heard on bass clarinet and bassoons.

It may seem as if Delius is now ready to move on – but not quite. Instead, the same pulse picks up again for a short third section, a mere two dozen bars, still very quiet but which ingeniously juxtaposes material from the first two sections. The melodic lines of the oboe and cor anglais from the previous one return but this time Delius adds a tenor soloist in counterpoint, gently breathing the melody associated with "the wide far distance" from the very start of the great central episode (Ex.7). The cellos and basses sink down deeper and deeper and come to rest on a final octave E natural, the roots of the E minor chord of the ninth which violins, violas, horns and timpani fill in above. Time is momentarily suspended before the fourth and final section of this "keystone" of the score. To my mind we are about to experience one of the greatest passages in all Delius.

For the first time – and what an effect it is! – we hear the chorus *a cappella* in a complex elaboration of Ex.7. They form a double choir of eight parts with the addition of two extra solo lines from a soprano and tenor who weave Ex.9x into the already highly contrapuntal texture. Strings join the voices at Fig.32 with the outline of Ex.8 emerging at Fig.32+4, and then the whole orchestra swiftly follows their lead and fuses into an ecstatic outpouring of melody: inimitable and unforgettable Delius. The summit comes at Fig.33 and holds for barely a dozen bars before beginning to fall away. As the music slackens its intensity and pulls up, the very opening of the work suddenly breaks in at Fig. 35 and we are back with a recapitulation of the very first section (Ex. 11):

Ex. 11

What follows is a skilfully condensed version of that opening material with the original "interlude" omitted entirely and the rest of the material pruned to three-quarters of its length. Though there are no significant new ideas, this certainly isn't just a straight 'photocopy' of the original exposition: for one thing, Delius varies the orchestration considerably. For example, Ex.1 returns in a fuller arrangement incorporating more of the woodwind, and with a new motif as shown in Ex.11 in the left-hand part of piano 1 (bars 1&2) and then passing to piano 2 (bars 3&4). Note the falling semitone of the first two quavers which links it to Ex.1x itself.

The harmonic colourings in the return of this material are also darker and harsher. Significantly, Delius also involves some of the voices as a background instrumental effect, again "like a sigh". He prunes back some of the opening material (i.e. the music originally between Fig.2 and Fig.4) before Ex.2 returns, in B flat this time rather than in E. There's also a difference in time signature: in the exposition this passage moves into 6/4, whereas in the recapitulation the 3/4 of Ex.11 is retained. The music sounds the same, but of course one bar of 6/4 is now equivalent to two bars of 3/4. This isn't Delius being haphazard: there is a good reason for it, which I'll point out below.

The orchestration in this recapitulation section continues to vary considerably from the exposition. The full score needs to be consulted to make this really clear, but broadly speaking the "tune" of Ex.2 (piano 2)

is now given to the strings rather than the woodwind and the semitonal quaver passages (piano 1) are omitted for the time being. That quaver movement does emerge strongly, though, from Fig.40+8 onwards and the music builds to a restatement of Ex.3 by oboes and clarinets at Fig.42+4, now transposed down a tone.

Where Delius, in the exposition, had previously led us off into a wayside 'interlude', he now makes a surreptitious but ingenious cut from what would have been the original Fig.7+1 to Fig.15+3: this 'join' is effected between Fig.42+8 and Fig.43+8 (a study of the score will make this point much clearer than I can put into words). The passage at Fig.15+9 ("with exultation") in the exposition then has its equivalent in the recapitulation at Fig.44. Now we can understand why Delius retains the 3/4 time signature (as mentioned above) throughout this section. Put as simply as possible, for the original slow 'interlude' of the exposition, the basic pulse was kept in crotchets with a later *accelerando* around Fig.14, to quicken the tempo considerably leading up to Fig.15+3, by which time the crotchet value had more or less become the equivalent of the quaver one. In the recapitulation, without the "interlude", no equivalent *accelerando* is necessary; hence Delius keeps his 3/4 time signature and the notation values are effectively halved. I'm afraid this is tricky to explain in words but a direct comparison of the passage at Fig.15+8 and its equivalent at Fig.44+1 will make clear what I'm trying to explain!

The triplets of Ex.4 reappear (Fig.45+4) as the exultancy of the music is punctured and the very opening material returns yet again at Fig. 46+5. (here Delius, perversely, does notate it in 6/4 from Fig. 47 onwards!) - this time with even more of an acerbic flavour, as if there's now a bitter taste in the mouth at having to return to earth from the heights. But Delius doesn't intend to leave us in despair: remembrance is all. At Fig.49, the cor anglais steals in with a recollection of Ex.10, this time with *divisi* strings enveloping it in a halo of gently undulating sustained chords, and very different from the icy rustlings of the violins at Fig.23+4. The 1st horn briefly echoes the cor anglais as the harmony settles, the music "dying away to the end" as Delius instructs.

The final impression haunts the memory: the three timpanists play very quiet rolls pitched on a tonic triad in G sharp minor, a key also rooted below in the sustained G sharps and D sharps of the cellos and double basses. But really the tonality is ambiguous: the upper strings hint at the relative

major as they share out the notes of a major seventh chord in B – or is it really a major ninth in G sharp minor without the tonic note? The point is this: we're suspended between major and minor, and here I must become subjective and say that to my mind the final impression is of a bitter-sweet backward glance at "the wide, far distance, the great solitude" that was glimpsed from the summit, but which, as a vision of eternity, is now only a memory. It's the great theme of Delius, in fact: the poignant contrast between the sense of transience and loss that characterizes human life and the eternal purity and renewal of Nature. So putting aside all analytical descriptions of this wonderful score, that, for me, is what the High Hills are really singing about.

SCHEMATIC SUMMARY

Section		*Description*	*From (fig.)**
I	A	Exposition (i)	(Opening)
	B	(Interlude)	8+7
	C	Exposition (ii)	15+3
II	A	"The Wide Far Distance – The Great Solitude"	17+7
	B		23+4
	C	Combination of IIA & IIB	27+7
	D	Recapitulation of IIA	30+1
III	A	Recapitulation of I with section IB omitted	35+1
	B	Coda: Recapitulation of IIB	49+1

**Note:* These figure and bar numbers are as used in the text above.

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THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

ASPECTS OF THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

A 'Symphony for Two Orchestras'
(In tribute to Edvard Grieg)

Robert Matthew- Walker

It is a cause for some regret that, with few exceptions, little in the way of detailed musical analysis of Delius's music has been published, which makes it difficult to demonstrate that the appeal of his art is not merely emotional, but is, more lastingly, the product of an original and genuinely creative mind. Those of us who know, study, and admire his music need no reminding of its singular characteristics, but it remains true that the only consequential thing which matters in attempting to demonstrate Delius's genius (as in the case of any other composer) is factual musical analysis. Anything else is criticism in its widest sense. The lack of analyses of Delius's music has meant that most commentaries are more akin to being discussions *around* his music rather than detailed examinations *of* it.

There is, of course, nothing inherently wrong in this. Any attempt to put the listener in the right frame of mind is to be welcomed, and there is much to be said for placing a composer and his work in their musico-historical contexts; by such means, the listener is thereby better placed in coming to terms with the music in question, by relating it to works written contemporaneously by other composers and to the general aesthetics prevalent at the time it was written.

In the early years of the twentieth-century, that is to say up to 1914, Delius's music was widely performed and praised by many leading musicians - Busoni, Stravinsky, Oskar Fried, Carl Schuricht, Vaughan Williams, Bartók, Ravel, Grieg, Richard Strauss, Percy Grainger and, of course, Thomas Beecham, amongst them. Each of these different artists admired his music, either by performing it or writing about it.

Delius's music, certainly, has not changed, for it clearly remains the same today as when it first appeared. Delius's detractors should attempt to discover the qualities his great contemporaries admired in his music, if

such criticism is to be founded upon knowledge of that which they dislike - rather than appearing to be nothing so much as an irrational reaction, somewhat like that of an emotional spasm.

Near the beginning of Deryck Cooke's now famous essay *Delius and Form*, first published in 1962 to mark the centenary of Delius's birth, Cooke made the straightforward point of not accepting that the formal methods of one composer should necessarily be a measure for understanding those of another. In the second part he analyses, from bar to bar, Delius's Violin Concerto - an analysis which demonstrates, beyond doubt, the unique organic qualities, indeed the hidden mastery, of this composer. This meticulous examination of the work is precisely that which ought to be applied in the analysis of all music - and can be - but which, for purely mnemonic purposes in classical works, has become shorthanded into such phrases as 'sonata form', 'binary', 'ternary', 'rondo', and so on. Those of us familiar with analysis know, broadly speaking, what these terms mean; but when we are confronted with music that does not readily conform to such descriptions it looks as though we shall have to do some hard work by ourselves.

In writing of Delius's *Brigg Fair* a few years ago, I made the point that the notion of writing a set of orchestral variations on a folk-based theme was 'in the air' so to speak at the time (i.e.1906-7), and that it may well have been the orchestral version of Grieg's *Old Norwegian Romance with Variations*, Opus 51, which had finally been completed and published in 1906, that sowed a seed in Delius's mind leading to his fascination with the English folk-song *Brigg Fair* - which tune had been brought to his attention by Percy Grainger when they first met during that same year. Lionel Carley, the new President of the Delius Society, has written extensively on both Grieg and Delius, and if at first it may appear that the connexions between these two composers are somewhat tenuous, they actually go far deeper and have a longer provenance than is generally realised.

Whilst on holiday in Filey in August 1879 – at the age of 17 – Delius took part in a concert in which he played a violin sonata by Grieg. We later learn that, during his early residence in Paris, Delius played the piano part in Grieg's *Third Violin Sonata* with the Norwegian violinist Arve Arveson. From his teenage years, therefore, and at one of his first public appearances, Delius was playing Grieg's music. As an adult, Delius

was first engaged as a representative in his father's business, travelling in England and on the Continent. Commerce took Delius as far north as Sweden and Norway, and it was there, as Thomas Beecham says in his book on Delius:

> The influence of the scenic grandeur of the Scandinavian peninsula, particularly the western extremity of it, was profound, mystical and indelible. For the first time, he realised his own secret affinity with high and lonely places…

In the mid-1880s, Delius was in the USA, where he later recalled:

> I was also in the wilderness in Florida, and have since never been able to live long in a crowd.

In March 1886 Delius played the last movement of Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto* at a college concert in Danville, Virginia - preceded by a group of songs by Robert Franz, a master of German lied, whose music is rarely heard today. Yet Liszt, for example, thought so highly of Franz that he published a monograph on him,and arranged several of his songs fore piano solo. One of the songs that preceded Delius's performance of the Mendelssohn on that occasion was Franz's song *Spring Night in Norway* - one wonders whether it was Delius himself who suggested the song be incorporated into the programme.

Back in Europe, having entered the Leipzig Conservatorium, he was to meet Grieg, beginning a long and mutually enriching friendship between the two composers. The story of Grieg meeting Delius's father in London, and encouraging him to permit his son to pursue his musical gifts, is well-known. In passing, we should also note Delius's dedication to Edvard Grieg in 1888 of his melodrama *Paa Vidderne*, and his dedication of the *Five Songs from the Norwegian* to Grieg's wife, Nina.

There are many instances of the friendship Grieg and Delius enjoyed, and in Grieg's last months in 1907 their friendship was further enhanced by the arrival of the prodigiously-gifted Australian musician, Percy Grainger. In a letter to Grainger of June 10th of that year, Delius wrote:

The feeling of nature I think is what I like so much in Griegs best

things. You have it too and I think we all 3 have something in common. I wont swear that I shant turn up on the steamer when you go to Bergen [to visit Grieg].

The following month, writing to Theodor Szántó on July 11th (who was to premiere the revised version of Delius's *Piano Concerto* three months later in London), Delius said he had 'finished an English Rhapsody'; this would have been, of course, *Brigg Fair,* although the use of the word 'finished' in this context must remain somewhat relative, in so far as a composition is entirely 'finished' - certainly with regard to a work prior to its first performance, or publication, or even, in some instances, after that. This is confirmed by Delius's letter to Granville Bantock of November 16th, in which he says "I am just finishing *Brigg Fair* and in two days will hand it over..." On February 1st, 1908 - that is, after the first performance, which was conducted by Bantock - he wrote again saying that "I want to make a slight alteration in the score of *Brigg Fair*.." - which he then goes on to detail.

Grainger's visit to Grieg in that summer of 1907 much pleased the ailing composer – and, on parting, Grieg gave Grainger a printed copy of his orchestral Opus 51. Grainger wrote in it: "Given to me by Grieg on leaving Troldhaugen, Summer 1907". They had planned to perform Grieg's *Piano Concerto* at the Sheffield Festival in September, but Grieg died in Copenhagen, soon after undertaking the journey to England. At the Festival, Grainger played the Concerto with Stanford conducting. On learning of Grieg's death from the newspapers, Delius wrote to Grainger, who replied that Grieg "was always talking of you, affectionately & admiringly, & told me lots of jolly anecdotes of your trips together in the High Hills".

In 1912, Delius completed *The Song of the High Hills*, which contains several references to, if not direct quotations from, Grieg's music. Because of these quotations and allusions, and because of the background circumstances leading to the work's composition, I feel that this piece is Delius's profound musical tribute to the Norwegian master. When it appeared, the work impressed Percy Grainger so much that he made a two-piano version of the score, which has never been published; clearly, *The Song of the High Hills* meant something special to him, as well.

I believe *The Song of the High Hills* to be effectively a large-scale wordless symphony, although in appending 'symphony' to it I am not trying to retitle (or resubtitle) the work. We know that Delius never wrote a symphony as such, nor did he apply the expression at any time to his own music. Indeed, the notion of what one might term 'symphonic writing' was in many respects anathema to his working processes (in so far as we understand them).

The Song of the High Hills is surely one of Delius's greatest works, a masterpiece of the first order. It exhibits a deeply *symphonic approach* on the part of the composer, so much so that I can well imagine that, whilst Delius certainly knew what he was doing from bar to bar, he was unaware of the special nature of the work he was creating. Consequently, whilst *The Song of the High Hills* might, in certain superficial aspects, structurally approach a one-movement symphony, at a deeper level it exhibits this unique composer's astounding grasp of the processes which he sets in train from bar 1 until bar 449 - the final bar in the work.

Those processes have more in common with symphonic thought than with any other known structuralisation of concert music. It is generally accepted that the symphony is the highest form of evolved orchestral music, because it is, simply, the most demanding of the composer. Although we know, by and large, what a symphony is – and can be, in our free-will driven society, although I am not one who takes every composer's word for what a symphony is at face value – most attempts to define the term have fallen short of general acceptance. The best (because it is the simplest and paradoxically the most comprehensive) definition of which I know is that by the late Hans Keller. Symphonic composition, he said, was 'the large-scale integration of contrasts'. He did not confine his definition to orchestral or other concert music - for he saw little or no difference between such large-scale integration in chamber or even solo instrumental music and in music for orchestra, enabling him to speak of 'symphonic' string quartets or piano sonatas.

The Song of the High Hills certainly contains contrasts – but it is only through factual analysis that one can demonstrate their large-scale integration. In such a way, in the inherently symphonic nature of this composition – of which, in some respects, I would repeat that Delius himself was probably unaware whilst writing it. We are confronted by a work, actually scored for what I term two orchestras (one instrumental,

the other wordless choral and solo singing), the originality and artistic achievement of which sets it on the highest level of concert music amongst that which we know appeared in the period of the 20th-century prior to the Great War.

In touching on these various aspects of *The Song of the High Hills,* this paper is not the place for detailed factual analysis of the work. I am aware Paul Guinery is providing an analysis of *The Song of the High Hills* (which I have not read, nor I have I discussed the work with him; needless to say, I am eagerly looking forward to his analysis), but in view of my comments above some further brief observations may be in order.

We should note that *The Song of the High Hills* is a single-movement structure which may be considered to be in four continuous sections, wherein the chorus is used, similarly to the 'piccola orchestra' of the first Dance Rhapsody, as a second - but distant - orchestra. In the *Dance Rhapsody No 1* Delius's two orchestras are the main first orchestra, of 100 players; the second 'piccola orchestra' has 30 players, drawn from the main first orchestra. In the *Dance Rhapsody* both orchestras have a structural function within a succession of aphoristic variations, kaleidoscopically tumbling one after another within three main sections, each of almost exactly 80 bars in length, plus a short coda.

In *The Song of the High Hills* Delius's 'second orchestra' is not placed within the larger one, but apart from it – "In the far distance", as it says in the score. The full orchestra calls for very large forces, including three timpanists (not two as the first edition claimed) as well as a sarrusaphone, which instruments, along with the bass drum, give a deep richness to the orchestral timbre - as if reflecting the inherently vast, implacable character of the Norwegian mountains that inspired the work, in which Delius said he:

> …tried to express the joy and exhilaration one feels in the mountains, and also the loneliness and melancholy of the higher solitudes and the grandeur of the wide, far distances. The voices represent Man in Nature - an episode which becomes fainter and disappears altogether.

One should not regard *The Song of the High Hills* as an orchestral

travelogue, as if it were a Scandinavian version of Richard Strauss's *Alpine Symphony (*which it predates by three years). If it is redolent of any work, it is of Sibelius's *Tapiola* (which it predates by 14 years), but such comparisons can be misleading. Sibelius's masterpiece *depicts* the forest in a composition wherein the tonality remains fixed – the trees in the forest cannot move, so the overall tonality (B minor) of *Tapiola* does not move (although broadening to the major at the end).

In *The Song of the High Hills* Delius embarks on a fully logical and unique symphonic journey (the contrasts finally integrated in the closing pages) from G minor towards the concluding tonic ninth of G sharp minor (the only known concert work to end in this key?), a process achieved with much subtlety throughout the inter-twined movements, the emergence and the leave-taking of the voices (and their impact on the music) being quite superbly controlled. The combination of the choral strands apart from and within the orchestral texture later in the score is the work of a composer of genius – for, once Man has arrived, Nature cannot be the same again, even if Man leaves, so G minor *has* to rise, if only by a semi-tone, to G sharp minor. Such is Delius's personification of the Ascent of Man on "the wide, far distances" that so fired his imagination as a youth and which reached its creative apogee in this astoundingly original masterpiece – the large-scale compositional integration of its contrasts truly making it a ' symphony for two orchestras'.

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THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

ON CONDUCTING THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

Bo Holten *

Before starting to conduct this piece, a few things have to be realised about the underlying shape of the almost half-our-long structure. It consists of four big climaxes - rehearsal numbers 7-8, 16-17, 33-34, 44-45 - each preceded by gradual and extended build-ups. After each climax there are usually a few bars of 'coming down', but it is characteristic of this piece that the 'climbing' sections are long and strenuous, and the climbing down is hardly there. After the first two climbs, the climaxes are followed by very long, resting, sections where the composer clearly is basking in the magnificent views: 8-12 and 17-30. After the third climax, at 35, we are confronted with one of the most surprising recapitulations in all of Delius, and after the fourth at 46 we are treated to one of those lovely sunsets that abound in his work.

So, the overall form is reasonably simple - and it is very important to realise this shape, because certain motifs and tunes are connected only to climbing sections, others only to viewing sections. And this has great bearing on how this music should be conducted. You have to know if you are on the way up, if you are exulting in the views, or contemplating the impressions. These three main feelings are what the piece consists of, and each of them requires different interpretations, different ways of handling rhythm and accents. As always in Delius, however, the composer's own virile passion for the grandeur of the mountains, is omnipresent in the score. There is no room for sentimentality here, no room for little nice feelings. It is all rough mountainsides in blazing sun or snowstorm:

*****Bo Holten is a composer (with over 100 works to his name) and a free-lance conductor of concerts, opera and chamber choirs (including the BBC Singers). He recorded *The Song* with the Århus Symphony Orchestra and the Århus Choirs in 2001.

Example 1

The opening icy statement of fifth-less major sevenths in very delian descending sequence, magically conveys that we are in the midst of snowy mountains. But already in bar five do we need to feel just a slight urgency: we want to move on! The question facing the conductor here is whether to play the first 4 bars as isolated and similar bars, or as a tune progressing. If you take the dynamic hairpins too literally, you run the risk of having the last note of every bar close it off, thus playing four more or less identical bars after each other. If you choose to consider the last crochet in every bar slightly as an upbeat to the next bar, you might succeed in tying the whole phrase together and thus starting the special delian variety of "unendliche Melodie" running through the whole piece. This interpretation is aided by the violas rather actively giving the second beat of every bar a good stress (and also supplying the missing fifths – Delius' saturation-rate is never thin for very long at a time) and after that supplying each bar with a crescendo that leads on to the next bar. It is quite typical of delian 'swing' to stress the second beat in 3/4 (also in 4/4, see below). The opening theme of *In a Summer Garden*, the big theme of the *3rd Violin Sonata* and many instances in *A Song of Summer* spring immediately to mind.

In the following four bars the stresses on the second beat continue in the wood-winds, relieved with elegant variety in bar 5, where it is on the third beat, thus underlining the urgency of the climbing soon to come. The second 4-bar phrase is extended by one bar (bar 9). Some conductors seem tempted to put a small fermata on this bar, but that is to me a rather un-delian thing to do. The ties in the wind parts reveal that Delius wants this bar to flow into the repeat of the opening statement from bar ten, and this

means that bar 9 might be almost a little shorter than written, preventing interrupting the momentum (always a crime in Delius).

At 2 Delius almost imperceptively introduces a figure which is identical with the 'sighing-motif' encountered very often in baroque music as a symbol of languishing or longing:

Example 2

Not so with Delius: a few bars later, just after 3, this motif is transformed into a climb-motif through removing the ties and insisting on a pounding, stodgy and stamping way of performance as seen in the first violins and violas in Example 3:

Example 3

At exactly the same moment, cellos and second violins are playing (legato, as opposed to the stamping fashion of the other strings) one of the most significant and frequent symbols of masculine activity in all of Delius, the accented triplet followed by a descending line. One bar later, seen in the second half of Example 3, both violin parts are playing the legato-triplet, violas and cellos taking over the stamping climb-motif. Conducting this, a not uncommon instance of delian polyphony, you have to make sure that

these two different simultaneous articulations both are clearly audible. At the same time you have to, as you always have to playing Delius, linger a bit on the first note of the accented triplet. This means that you will also have to linger a tiny bit on the first note of the climb-motif, which will only underline the strain in it. Even if, as you can see in example 3, all the lines are actually descending as usual with this composer, he nonetheless succeeds in conveying a kind of struggling heroism of someone relentlessly ascending the steep slopes.

At 4 the climb-motif is again transformed back to legato-embellishments slightly longing in character in the woodwinds, accompanying this theme in the strings:

Example 4

In my view, looking closely at these four bars, this should be articulated in the following way to achieve a fitting delian intensity (the added word 'singing' looks as if put in by Grainger!). The swinging 6/4 rhythm is underlined in the first bar by stressing slightly the c# and the b crotchets as upbeats, and they should not be lingered upon. The first three crochets of bar 2 should slightly rush towards towards the accented long note in the middle of the bar. It is tempting now to rest a bit on this longer note to compensate for the rubato on the first three crotchets, but this is to me all wrong in Delius: you have to move on to bar three without loosing the pulse or the momentum, to repeat the rush on the first three crotchets of bar 3. Again it might be tempting for some to linger on the last crotchet of bar 3, to underline the climactic first note of bar 4 - but, again, you would loose the momentum of the whole phrase. The thing to do is to make the first crotchet of bar 4 at tiny bit longer (not necessarily stronger!), and then

win back this lost time by rushing progressively on crochet 2 and 3 towards the long note of bar 4. This dotted minim can then simulate a ritardando with the 3 crochets in the cello part through returning to the basic tempo, and you come out in the end having lost no time in relation to the basic pulse - just playing around it and getting ready to move on! The crime of some (to me inadequate) Delius performances would be to rest too long on the last long notes of bars 2 and 4 and thus stopping the flow of the music twice within 4 bars.

I have to underline that the actual tempo modifications described above are all minute and almost imperceptible to the general listener. But these modifications are, of course, of a type used generally in all music, and they are especially important in Delius, as he is mostly harmonizing his tunes in 4 or 5 parts. This creates a constant density, a 'sameness' in sound which makes the rhythmical and melodic articulation crucial for the life of the music. Contemporaries of Delius, like Mahler, Elgar, Strauss, Janacek, Sibelius, Nielsen or Debussy are all constantly changing the density of harmony and accompaniment so as to relieve the listener's perceptional apparatus. Delius is relentlessly ignoring such compromises, and, as a true avant-garde composer, wholly relying on the expressive power of his endlessly varied combinations of harmonic shades within its four and five parts.

I am sure that exactly this implacable attitude of our composer, and its musical results, is especially loved by the readers of this publication (including myself), but it could be one of the reasons why Delius will probably never become a household name on a par with the 7 'greats' mentioned above. Performances of Delius that do not take these idiosyncrasies into account, trying not only to exploit them to the full, but also to compensate through minute articulation of details, will eventually fail and result in plodding Delius-playing, which makes the music sound uninspired - which we all know it isn't.

Example 5

This is one of the most impressive passages in the whole work (the wind parts are excluded from that example, as they all double choir or string parts). I have chosen it for its characteristic delian leaning on the unaccented beats of the bar, especially the second beat in 4/4, in which we are here. This is prominent in every bar on this page, and obvious in the top soprano part. In this wonderful melodic line (that Delius was later to re-use at the end of the first of the *Songs of Farewell*, albeit there in ¾), these second beats should be stressed, although without breaking its shape. Stressing the second beat will almost automatically also imply that the first note (not the beat!) of every bar should be slightly shortened, or at least have a slight diminuendo to leave space for the stress on the second beat. This again, in what I would call a good and delian interpretation, means that the first beat should be slightly lingered-on (although the note should be shortened!); the second beat should be strong, accented and feeling a bit late and then the rest of the bar is slightly rushed to the next first beat, which will again be longish but unaccented and with a short note. This results in a lot of accented upbeats on 2 and 4, which again creates this typical delian swing, which ought to run through the whole piece.

In the 'viewing-sections of this piece, where the harmony rests on pedal points, often supporting multi-divided strings, the woodwind is usually asked to supply little rolling figures of 3 or 4 notes. This might suggest high blue sky, birds or anything airy. I vividly recall the incredulous faces of the players, when I recorded the work, when I asked them to play these figures "out of time", i.e. not quite together with the rest of the orchestra. Listening again to the recording recently, I think they succeed quite well in this. I am sure that Delius's notation here is meant to be only approximate, and that these 'doodlings' should be what Mahler calls "wie ein Naturlaut" ["like Nature"]. In the overall view of the piece, the orchestration of these sections are really very delicately done. The horn writing in fifths and fourths - accompanied by very high and very low string chords suggesting the great hights as well as depths, and at the same time leaving space for melodic material in the middle - is Delius-orchestration at its best. Conducting this, you have to make sure that the pulse (which has got to be there) is not restricting the players to a strict beat, but letting them articulate their improvisatory lines with quite some freedom.

The very middle of the piece is taken up by a long section with the violins divided into four parts constantly in high, running semiquavers, the lower strings playing long chords in the 'valleys . This has to be combined with the woodwinds playing the improvisatory 'Norwegian' triplet-tune. The upper strings need a very clear beat from the conductor to play their stratospheric semiquavers at a very steady pace, whereas the woodwind should play their tunes almost ignoring the beat. It is not easy for the conductor to make this section come off in an effortless way.

The orchestration of the climb-sections is an altogether different problem. Before 1900, or thereabouts, Delius developed his orchestration technique a lot in a short time. From the tentative and naive orchestration in *"Florida"*, there is a great leap to the Straussian orchestra style of *Lebenstanz* or *Paris* only about a decade later. But as his own harmonic and melodic style became more individual in the first years of the new century in *A Village Romeo and Juliet* and *A Mass of Life*, so his orchestral style developed into something quite personal and original. But somehow, later on, Delius seems to have lost interest in refined orchestration - and this shows clearly in works like *The Song of the High Hills*, the *Requiem* and the three string concertos from around the time of the First World War, although not in *Ein Arabeske*.

Have a look at a page from one of the climb-sections at 16 in *The Song of the High Hills*:

Example 6

As a devout delian myself, I certainly know what to do with it, but what about a conductor not knowing Delius the man or the musician? It is virtually what I should call crude orchestration, the intent of which is completely unclear for the uninitiated. It consists of routine and constant doublings of a basically 4-part texture of crotchets plodding along in a rather directionless way. That the passage actually is one of the most marvellous climaxes in the piece is undetectable - and it needs careful thinking and 'direction-making' (dynamic planning and phrasing) from the conductor to ensure that it come off in performance. It seems as if Delius, at this stage in his career, was content with roughly writing the music of his pieces, and then relying on sympathetic friends and conductors to solve the rest of the problems from the rostrum. Considering the very detailed pages of 12 years earlier, this strikes me as pretty strange. Is it laziness? Or is it the relentless and uncompromising artist not bothering to cope with ridiculous and 'obvious' details in his scores that should be clear to anyone? Or is it Delius stripping his scores of all ornamental finery, leaving only the bare bones of polyphonic lines, - a tendency that was much in the air in the century's second decade? This is really hard to answer but interesting to speculate on.

Finally, about momentum in Delius-performance: I have not considered any harmonic aspects in this article - it would take us too far astray. Harmony was, of course, Delius' major concern, and considering this, it is strange that so little of value has been written about it. I suppose most delians hardly dare enter this enormous area, fearing it to be overwhelming in scope and complexity. We could have hoped that Hutchings, Deryck Cooke or Fenby would have written about it in detail, but alas, none of them did. However, from the conductor's standpoint, the multitude of harmonic shades and colourings are baffling in a score like *The Song of the High Hills.*

At a few recording sessions you have hardly the time to go into details like really interpreting the harmony in a sensible way, weighing the balances according to the lines, picking out the important dissonances and such matters. But what you can do in the space of short rehearsal time is to get the pacing right, the tempos and the momentum. And if this is solved some of the other problems simply solve themselves in the process: it is essential in harmonically heavily-loaded music like Delius's, that the conductor keeps the music's forward thrust going. The rate of the pulse

may vary, but a certain steadiness of forward motion has to be respected, almost like in good jazz-ballad playing. If one tries to linger too much over beautiful spots or smart transitions, one falls into the trap of prettifying the music, and thereby it is lost between one's hands. It looses it's virility and it dissolves into meaningless sweets and is thereby often misunderstood.

Delius' music has to be kept crisp and rather straight-faced, and it should only be performed by people who already love it. William Blake says: "He who binds to himself a joy, does it's winged life destroy, but he who kisses joy as it flies, lives in eternity's sunrise". Delius' music should thus be kissed as it flies by in its vigour and its beauty. Not necessarily fast or cold. On the contrary it needs careful and detailed interpretation. But don't embrace it too violently while conducting, don't hug it from the podium. You have to forget yourself if you want to succeed conducting Delius!

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ANOTHER VIEW ON CONDUCTING DELIUS

Although professing to harbour no further ambitions, Meredith does admit to a desire to perform certain works: 'I'd like to do Delius's *The Song of the High Hills.* It is very beautiful. People often lean back on Delius's music without seeing the urge and energy. There must be that inner spring of energy in Delius, fire in the belly, not just beguiling sounds. One thing that concerns Meredith is the almost computer-like norm of modern performance. 'These days it's all about clarity, precision, articulation, and that's about it'. Performers seem restricted and not at easy swaying the music a little. I was conducting something once and James Bowman said to me "My God, you are an old-fashioned conductor" and I said "Good!"'

Meredith Davies in conversation with Raymond Banning, 1999
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THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

THE RECORDINGS

Lewis Foreman

Luton Choral Society, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Beecham (24′ 45″)
Abbey Road 1: 22 November 1946
HMV DB 6470/2 (LP: HMV ALP 1889; 'The Music of Delius' Vol 2:SHB 54; LVT1045; CDM 7 64054 2

Liverpool Philharmonic Chorus, RLPO/ Groves (24′ 58″)
Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool: 18 and 18 June 1973
LP: HMV ASD2958; the CD coupling for *Koanga* on EMI 7243 5 85142 2 3

BBC Singers, BBC Symphony Chorus, BBCSO/ Rozhdestvensky (25′ 25″)
RFH: 10 December 1980
IMP BBC Radio Classics 15656 91332

Ambrosian Singers, RPO/Eric Fenby (29′ 42″)
Walthamstow Assembly Hall: 5 & 6 April 1983
Unicorn-Kanchana DKP(CD) 9029

Chorus and Orchestra of Welsh National Opera/Sir Charles Mackerras (25′ 59″)
Brangwyn Hall, Swansea: April 1993
London 443 171-2; also in Decca (British Collection) 470 375-2 (2 CDs)

Aarhus University Choir, Hummerkoret, Aarhus Chamber Choir, Aarhus Symphony Orchestra/Bo Holten (25′ 58″)
Frichsparken, Aarhus, Denmark May 2001
Danacord DACOCD 536

Dating from the high point of his maturity, before he had any idea of his ultimate fate, Delius's *The Song of the High Hills* is as much his credo as *A Mass of Life* which preceded it. We know, of course, of Delius's youthful passion and veneration for Norway, a sympathy which remained

with him all his life, trying to spend his summers in the mountains, the spiritual home of much of his most epic music. So for all lovers of his music his major work evoking the Norwegian mountains has to have a special significance. In his contribution to the programme note for the first performance in 1920 Delius wrote: 'I have tried to express the joy and exhilaration one feels in the mountains, and also the loneliness and melancholy of the high solitudes, and the grandeur of the wide, far distances . . . The human voices represent Man in Nature – an episode which becomes fainter and then disappears altogether.' It is clear that the treatment of the voices demands the highest standards from the choir, which must be perfectly in tune throughout, and, as they are not singing words but vocalising, create the right sound. Where Delius demands solo voices, they are marked in the score to be from the choir, but although that is where they sit, the vocal demands on them are crucial to the success of the work, not least the quiet entries, notably magical in Mackerras's recording. It takes Olympian choral singers to have the confidence to bring this off. None here are below par.

Although already the pre-eminent conductor of Delius, at first Sir Thomas Beecham seems not to have warmed to *A Song of the High Hills.* Could it possibly have been because various other conductors had stolen his thunder? Beecham even hinted he would be sympathetic to cutting what he called the 'slightly redundant . . . purely instrumental portion of the middle section', which perhaps underlines that initially he was bore d. It was Albert Coates who gave the first performance in February 1920 nine years after the work had been written. Coates first championed the work; later, not unexpectedly Sir Henry Wood took it up, and Charles Kennedy-Scott (conductor of the celebrated Philharmonic Choir), Adrian Boult and Julius Harrison also conducted it.

Even after he had given it, in March 1936, Beecham did not return to the work until the second London Delius Festival when it was in the first concert. This, in October 1946, was a broadcast performance which led to his recording in November that year. So when Beecham recorded it he was not bringing a lifetime's experience of performance to his task, but rather was pioneering, undertaking what was for him a ground-breaking traversal of new territory. In view of Beecham's late interest it is not surprising that it was the one major work by Delius omitted from the 1929 Delius Festival at Queen's Hall. Was it also, one wonders, then felt to be

'difficult' for a wider audience?

We have no recording, either studio or off-air, from before the Second World War, so we have no way of knowing how it was then played. Yet one's first shock on confronting the score is to see the duration given as 35 minutes – Beecham took nine minutes off this and even Fenby's more relaxed reading does not exceed half an hour. Can Delius ever have expected it to run so long, or perhaps this was the running time of an early performance.

The second thing which strikes one on looking at the score is the size of Delius's orchestra. It is fulsome to say the least, calling for a substantial complement of strings (Delius specifies sixty six: 16, 16, 12, 12, 10), triple wind including cor anglais, bass clarinet and sarrusophone, six horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, two harps, celesta, four timps requiring three players, percussion, and the mixed choir. The sarrusophone part is normally played by the contra-bassoon; remembering its distinctive sound in Bax's First Symphony I wonder whether it was used in any of these recordings.

This is a work dependent on getting the right aural perspective - and thus a performance in a resonant acoustic, no matter how matter of fact, will tend to have a special quality. It is therefore a pity that Sir Charles Groves's performance in York Minster with Liverpool forces in 1973, and Donald Hunt's at the Worcester Three Choirs in 1993 (both of which were broadcast and survive in various private collections) - although I hear reports that chorally the latter was an unrehearsed disaster - are not more widely available, while Rozhdestvensky's BBC performance in 1980 in the clinical un-atmospheric acoustic of the Royal Festival Hall *is* on CD. Of other possible celebrated performers we should perhaps touch on Barbirolli, who with Hallé forces presented it in Manchester in May 1954 – I wonder if it survives?

In this work one is seeking the almost impossible - on the one hand a plasticity and rightness of changing tempi, but on the other, in a work which can sound sectional if not sympathetically treated, a sense of structure; an overall web of constantly changing orchestral colour, and with a host of orchestral moments audible and properly in place. When the voices enter, they must be treated instrumentally and yet make a telling emotional impact - evoking at once the epic far horizons of the Norwegian mountains, and the welling power of the spirit, without the

use of any words.

In the first recording, made in Studio One at Maida Vale, Beecham was comparatively swift, and because he was recording in mono on six 78rpm sides to some extent he eschewed the lingering atmosphere later explored by Fenby. Who was the more authentic, for both had close personal acquaintance with Delius and his music? In *The Gramophone* for October 1947, Alec Robertson was ecstatic in his response to Beecham's recording, writing: 'The Delius Trust have done wisely to record a work which for sheer sustained beauty of sound has no equal among Delius' own compositions, and for which no work by any other composer affords a parallel. Delius, as he well knew, owed Beecham an incalculable debt: for no other conductor has known how to bring to complete fullness of life and beauty this strange and unique music. With the very first bars of *The Song of the High Hills* one hears the magic touch of this great conductor in the peculiar resilience of the singing strings, and from these bars to the long drawn out and only just audible close that magic spell is always potent. . . Of this inspired performance and the superb way in which it is recorded I can only speak in terms of the highest praise and gratitude to all concerned.'

Beecham's is a superbly judged performance, but possibly listening over half a century later we might grudgingly have to agree that, while it touches all the emotional buttons, and is never less than very fine, it reminds us of an artist used to Abbey Road's Studio One, fitting his material to the limitations of his circumstances to maximum effect. However, it is elusive on CD and currently unavailable; on EMI it must have come and gone very quickly, while it has not yet been re-presented in the Naxos Beecham Delius edition.

Sir Charles Groves was for a short time one of the leading exponents of Delius, conducting some of the biggest revivals, but I have to say that for me his performances do not stand up as well as others of his time, and that is especially true of this score. For a long time on LP, and briefly reissued as the coupling to his EMI recording of *Koanga*, it was easy to miss on CD. In its day it was valuable for being the first recording in modern stereo sound, but compared to the competition it now seems curiously matter-of-fact, despite some lovely instrumental detailing, notably the harp and the oboe/cor anglais duet after 21, and tremendous choral climaxes, now given their head on CD. Compared to Bo Holten's eloquent horns, the

RLPO, despite playing all the notes perfectly, somehow find the magic eluding them. In the hall I am sure we would have greeted this ecstatically, and if you only had one version you would probably cherish it, but after repeated hearings comparing it with other wonderful readings for me it just fails to inspire.

Various members of the Delius Society turned up at Walthamstow for the sessions with Fenby conducting in 1984, produced by Christopher Palmer. This is a special reading and Fenby brings a unique vision to his performance, at 29' 42" the slowest of those we have. At the time I was ecstatic about all his performances in the Unicorn series, but listening again, despite the natural flow, and the clearly delineated solo lines (again, wonderful celesta and harp after 21, and ensuing oboe and cor anglais duet), and timps that for once are something more than muffled rumbles, I find some of it sluggish. The choir are outstanding when they are quiet. A fabulous fade out at 29 – the horns just perfect – and the quiet entry of the chorus at 30, on the edge of audibility, spine-tingling.

The size of the choir, too, can contribute something special to our view of *The Song of the High Hills*, and I must say here the larger the better. I suspect the Luton Choral Society in 1946 was a substantial body, as was Rozhdestvensky's at the Festival Hall in 1980. My only reservation with Mackerras is the feeling at the ultimate climax that the choir could have been a little larger. This, too, might have been Fenby's Achilles heel, for the Ambrosian Singers are by a long way the smallest we have, yet his is a wonderful choral climax and we never notice the size of the choir.

Because of its huge orchestral scale, this is a difficult work to capture as a living experience on disc, even today. In the hall the horns in particular have a visceral quality and an edge difficult to experience on disc. With so much quiet music juxtaposed with enormous climaxes, particularly the central choral climax, and with so many crucial, often short, linking phrases, the treatment of the timpani – in five different places three of them play chords – and the perspective of the harp, make the impact of any performance a matter of where one is sitting and any recording a contest between atmosphere and detail.

Thus in the Festival Hall in 1980, Rozhdestvensky and his BBC forces are never less than excellent, but there is never a true pianissimo and only Mackerras achieves on disc the kind of awe-inspiring hush which is riveting in the right location. At normal sitting room level, there are details

here which are inaudible, those when the volume is turned up make the climaxes apocalyptic. On headphones this is remarkable.

I had listened to all the above before I found a copy of the most recent recording, that directed by Bo Holten in his collection *Frederick Delius: Norwegian Masterworks*. Frankly I was not expecting much but in fact I was overwhelmingly wrong: this is something new, a superbly characterised and involving reading which grips from start to finish. Holten's Danish players respond superbly to his very upfront reading, and although he does not get the kind of pianissimos that Mackerras achieves, this is a different kind of performance, very much more in your face. The opening is more a raging winter storm than a vista of the mountains, and it is a sign of what is to come. The engineers bring the horns in particular into much more resonant focus than any of the others, also the harp, and indeed any instrumental solo. The timpanists seem to be using harder sticks than any of the other recordings and it immediately clarifies the unspecified reservations I had about the distant thunder of some of their woolly smudges. The solo voices never achieve that magical quietness teetering on inaudibility, but their plangent quality, especially the tenor John Kjoller, give them a whole new vibrant quality. The sheer spirit and impact, combined with the wonderful detail, set new standards in recording this work.

In Ken Russell's film of *Song of Summer*, we see Delius being carried up a mountain by Jelka Delius and Percy Grainger to catch the sunset in the mountains for the last time, accompanied on the soundtrack by the choral climax of *The Song of the High Hills*. The previous sequence, as they march upward in the mist, had started with the two piano version which is faded into the orchestral score at the climax. This music on two pianos should not work, but in Percy Grainger's arrangement it makes a fascinating muscular experience, shorn of its romantic choral and orchestral trappings. There does not seem to be a commercial recording but some may remember an unofficial tape of Neely Bruce and Christopher Oldfather playing it in Calvary United Methodist Church, Danville in March 1986, and from their timing of 21′51″ you may draw your own conclusions.

This is a remarkable score which fully responds to the wonders of modern technology. If, for my money, Mackerras takes the palm, Fenby has his own special insights, reinforced by his producer, the late Christopher Palmer. Palmer brought his own personal intuitive response to Delius

and Fenby, and Fenby's Delius. But even so, the recording which fully takes advantage of modern recording is Bo Holten's exciting traversal of the hills, thrilling in its drive and freshness, and giving us unique musical insight into Delius's own lifelong emotional response to Norway and his experience as a young man in the Hardanger Vidda.

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IN A JAPANESE CATALOGUE

11. The Song of the Hige Hills (song of high hill)
RT 02/06
compose 1911.
first performance Feb 26. 1920. Philharmonic Choir, the cond. Albert Coates, Queen's Hall, Royal Philharmonic Society concert.
memo chorus orch – textless. Non lyric chorus and orchestral music.
1911 year commencement. 1912 year completion. December 7th of 1922. the Albert Coats replays with the Philharmonic Society Concert. April 28th of 1924, the Bridgeport and the Connecticut, April 30th of 1924, New York, the Carnegie * hole and the New York Philharmonic Orch, the the Bridgeport Oratorio Society, you replay with direction of the Grainger. This time as for the D na with the letter which the write for it could point in the ????, the timpani player as for 2 people and certain the mistake 3 has clearly wntten in score. August of 1925, the Grainger and the Balfour Gardiner, perform the arrangement for piano four-hand performance of the Grainger before the composition person. It likes the D fla greatly. 1926 years. with direction of the Grainger, you replay with the Spring of 1927. the Koussevitzky replays in Boston (Carley letter collection).

(*Found on the Internet: an extract from a Japanese catalogue of Delius's music — this is genuine, not a spoof!)*

THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Times 3 June 1920
The second performance of *The Song of the High Hills*

The Philharmonic Choir and the Philharmonic Orchestra, two distinct bodies, combined last night to gave us Holst's Hymn of Jesus, Delius's The Song of the High Hiills and the Ninth Symphony. The short solos in the Delius were sung by Miss Maud Wilby and Mr Norman Stone……. Mr Holst conducted his own work, and Mr Coates the others.

It must be said at once that these three works were a severe test for the choir, and that they came through it in triumph. The choral work in the Beethoven, at a very late hour, could hardly have been better done…

[Here followed a paragraph about The Hymn of Jesus]

Delius's work is in strange contrast. The music paints the rapture of contemplation that the mountaineer knows. But one asks oneself how far music can paint such a subject. Both music and poetry seem to demand action, either past or in immediate prospect, and to be able to expiate on only such feelings as arise in connection with this. Music does this, not by making noises like the actions hinted at, but by weaving its own motives in a semblance of cause and effect. In Delius the motives are there in plenty, but we are never allowed to look at them one sat a time, and so we lose all sense of antecedence and consequence. The result is a gorgeous sensation like that of a lustrous spring day; we are very much alive, and dazzled by the splendour, but feel that we could enjoy it even more if we had something definite to do or think. Then comes the terrible wordless cry from the choir, which seems to take an unfair advantage of us, getting down among our heart-strings, without letting us know whether is it ecstasy or pain, and we feel rather frightened amid all this splendour.

DSJ No. 70 – January 1981

Royal Philharmonic Society concert – cond. Gennady Rozhdestvensky

The Delius items in the Royal Philharmonic Society's concert on December 10th sadly fell short of expectations. Much as one may admire Ida Haendel's interpretations of the Elgar, Walton and Britten violin concertos, her first encounter with the Delius concerto yielded an approach that was inclined to be aggressive at the expense of the more poetic insight to which one is accustomed in this work. Her superb technique did however enable her to manage comfortably the 12/8 *allegretto* section at an unusually quick tempo. Rather than scaling the heights, Rozhdestvensky's view of *The Song of the High Hills* tended to flatten the contours. Nevertheless there was much to admire in this performance, especially the chorus's outstanding contribution which in the broadcast was perfectly balanced with splendid 'distancing' effect. One could have wished for stronger accentuation on the violins' first beat at the very opening and elsewhere, for the phrasing robbed that theme of much of its freshness and vigour. Similarly the magical timpani entries on the last page needed marking up. Over the air they went for nothing. This and the unaccompanied choral entry are great moments, not just in Delius but in all music. It was also noted in this performance that three soprano soloists were used instead of one at the work's choral climax. Let us hope that Rozhdestvensky, always an interesting conductor, with his inclinations toward British music will return to this work and give us more Delius, even *A Mass of Life* which be had planned but was unable to give us ten years ago.
Stephen Lloyd

WHEN DELIUS WAS A REPERTORY COMPOSER IN ENGLAND ...

Lyndon Jenkins

Quite a lot is being said and written at present about Delius's music not being played enough, and I suspect that few of us disagreed with the views expressed by Michael Kennedy in his *Spectator* article last year (*Out in the Cold,* reproduced in Journal 137). It set me thinking about a time when Delius was listened to as a repertory composer – I suppose in the years between 1930 and 1970 – and then, taking up Michael Kennedy's point about the music needing champions, just how much Delius owed to the conductors and instrumentalists of those days for its regular and continuing promotion.

It was Beecham who laid the foundations, of course, notably through the three volumes of Delius Society discs he made during the 1930s, and by playing the repertoire unceasingly up and down the country, both then and in the decades that followed. But others such as Henry Wood, Hamilton Harty, Barbirolli, Boult, Sargent, Leslie Heward, Richard Austin and Julius Harrison were equally enthusiastic at that time: Barbirolli could be found conducting *Eventyr* and *In a Summer Garden* in Glasgow, Harty introduced *A Mass of Life* to Manchester, Heward did *North Country Sketches, Paris, Sea Drift* and the *Double Concerto* in Birmingham, Austin the *Violin Concerto* and other pieces in Bournemouth, Harrison *The Song of the High Hills* and more in his summer festivals of British music at Hastings. In London the indefatigable Wood gave first performances – *A Song of Summer* and the *Idyll* in 1931 and 1933 – and Sargent premièred *Songs of Farewell*. Wood also conducted all four Concertos with Albert Sammons, Moura Lympany and the Harrison sisters at the Proms; a substantial Delius concert in 1931 was typical of him, and in 1935 he repeated the *Violin Concerto* and later put on *Sea Drift*.

After Adrian Boult became the BBC's chief conductor in 1930, he saw to the inclusion of Delius on the radio, and was himself enterprising enough to take on rarities such as *Lebenstanz* and Lionel Tertis's arrangement for violin and viola of the Double Concerto, besides *The Song of the High Hills* and other pieces. After premièring the *Violin Concerto* in 1919 and championing his music in Birmingham between 1924-9, Boult had been

DELIUS CONCERT

THURSDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 1931

Conductor - - - - SIR HENRY WOOD

PART I.

A DANCE RHAPSODY (No. 1) - - -	*Delius*
SONGS with Orchestra (*a*) "Whither"	*Delius*
(*b*) "Twilight Fancies"	*orch.*
(*c*) "Sweet Venevil"	*Beecham*
CONCERTO for Violin and Orchestra - -	*Delius*
A SONG OF SUMMER - - - - -	*Delius*
(First performance)	
CONCERTO for Pianoforte and Orchestra - -	*Delius*
AN ENGLISH RHAPSODY "Brigg Fair" -	*Delius*

PART II.

THE WALK TO THE PARADISE GARDEN (Intermezzo from "A Village Romeo and Juliet")	*Delius*
SONGS (*a*) "The Nightingale" - -	*Grieg*
(*b*) "Come unto these yellow sands"	*Nicoll*
(*c*) "A little Snowdrop" - -	*Stanford*
INTRODUCTION, Act III. (Lohengrin) - -	*Wagner*

DORA LABBETTE

Solo Violin:

ORREA PERNEL

Solo Pianoforte:

KATHARINE GOODSON

Encores cannot be allowed in the First Part of the Programme

In accordance with the requirements of the London County Council:

I. The public may leave at the end of the performance or intervals by all exit doors, and such doors must be open at that time.

II. All gangways, corridors, staircases and external passageways intended for exit shall be kept entirely free from obstruction, whether permanent or temporary.

III. Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating or to sit in any of the other gangways. If standing be permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, sufficient space shall be left for persons to pass easily to and fro and to have free access to seats.

SMOKING PERMITTED

(Except in the portion of the Grand Circle reserved for non-smokers)

ABDULLAS FOR CHOICE

much in favour with Delius, and reaped his reward through the BBC having the first performance of the *Fantastic Dance* in 1934. Meanwhile, other conductors such as Constant Lambert were making the occasional record (as was Eugene Goossens in America, where also Barbirolli was conducting much Delius in the late 1930s at his concerts with the New York Philharmonic); sadly, Geoffrey Toye did not add to his small but select Delius discography.

In the 1940s another conductor with a strong feeling for Delius's music emerged in Basil Cameron, who became Wood's assistant at the Proms, and after Wood's death in 1944 kept the flame alive: *Paris, Brigg Fair* and the first *Dance Rhapsody* were all favourites of his, and he accompanied Clifford Curzon and Iris Loveridge in the *Piano Concerto* and Jean Pougnet in the *Violin Concerto*. In 1947, of course, a real Delius champion in the person of Sir Malcolm Sargent became a fixture at the Proms. His Liverpool period between 1942-8 had already included most of Delius's orchestral works (and he had made with Sammons the first-ever recording of the Violin Concerto), but after he became the BBC's chief conductor at the Proms in 1950 Sargent was able to exercise an immense influence over the programmes there: only he could have put on a 90-minute all-Delius first half made up of *Sea Drift*, the *Violin Concerto*, Dance Rhapsody No.1, two substantial excerpts from *A Mass of Life, A Song before Sunrise* and *La Calinda.* And in 1955 (and again in 1966) the Proms offered *A Mass of Life.* After Beecham's death in 1961 Sargent perhaps saw a mantle there to assume, and he made first recordings of the *Cello Concerto* (also Jacqueline du Pré's first concerto recording) and *Songs of Farewell.* And not only the Proms: he gave *A Mass of Life* in Huddersfield and Leeds, and *Sea Drift* in Liverpool and Nottingham; in 1966 he planned to couple the *Requiem* with the *Cello Concerto* at an Albert Hall concert, but his final illness intervened.

Post-war the music had been given an immense fillip by Beecham's seven-concert Delius Festival in 1946, and the recordings that came out of it: once the records of the *Violin Concerto* were published in 1947, for instance, it was played at the Proms each season up to 1951, conducted variously by Boult, Sargent or Cameron. Stanford Robinson brought some of the operas to radio, and a new conductor, former LSO violist Anthony Collins, produced some fine discs. Elsewhere in Britain, conductors in permanent positions were continuing to carry the flag: Barbirolli, back

in Manchester since 1943, had always been a great Delius enthusiast, George Weldon in Birmingham only a slightly lesser one; Hugo Rignold, succeeding Sargent in Liverpool in 1948, was attracted to elusive scores such as *In a Summer Garden* and all of them – including Charles Groves when he took over Bournemouth's orchestra from Rudolf Schwarz in 1951 – frequently programmed the miniatures. Groves was to become another Delius champion, of course, notably in the 1960s when he did sterling work during his Liverpool years, introduced *Appalachia* to the Proms and assumed the place vacated by the death of Sargent in guiding the choral works such as *A Mass of Life, Sea Drift* and *Songs of Sunset* onto disc. And when he brought his operatic experience to the table the result was the first recording of *Koanga,* the beginning of an Indian summer so far as the operas went because another dedicated Delian then emerged in the person of Meredith Davies, who undertook not only the violin and double concertos (with Menuhin and Tortelier) and the *Requiem* and the *Idyll* but *A Village Romeo and Juliet* and *Fennimore and Gerda* as well.

So far so good: the cracks at the BBC began to appear, I suppose, in the Glock era that began in 1959. While Sargent was still at the Proms his prestige would ensure a certain tradition being carried on, but after his death Delius performances soon began to thin out. In a much earlier Journal I seem to remember an article protesting that the BBC Symphony Orchestra performed only eight Delius works in the ten years between 1965-75. And with Beecham gone, Sargent in 1967 and Barbirolli in 1970, all the Delius champions with the greatest prestige disappeared from the wider scene within a decade. The music was now going to need special pleading, and their lineal successors – John Pritchard, Vernon Handley, Norman Del Mar – were never going to have *quite* the same influence, even when they were in permanent positions (which not all of them were). Special pleading was certainly in evidence from Eric Fenby in a remarkable and unexpected series of recordings, but it would be almost two decades and a different regime altogether before another BBC chief conductor, Andrew Davis, was in a position to manoeuvre Delius back to somewhere nearer the centre, and then only as part of a warmer embracing of English music *in toto.* Fortunately, the conductors mentioned earlier, together with Sir Charles Mackerras, David Lloyd-Jones, Richard Hickox and Mark Elder, have failed neither Delius nor us; nor, indeed, have the modern-day successors to the Harrisons and Albert Sammons, Tasmin Little and Julian

Lloyd Webber, who have tended the smaller garden of Delius's chamber music with infinite care, patience and dedication.

Just how well off Delius's music is compared with some other British composers was a point I was able to emphasise when I gave the Fenby Lecture at the Delius Festival in Jacksonville in 1999: a sustained stream of publications, performances and recordings combined have prevented any kind of eclipse. I also underlined just how much the music owed to its intensive and consistent promotion over so many years by the Delius Trust. Without the Trust we should inevitably have had much less Delius, both in the concert hall and on record, and would have been vastly the poorer. For some of us older devotees, it would have meant being robbed of some of our most treasured memories. Michael Kennedy concluded his article by recalling Neville Cardus saying that Delius's music "will never be familiar to a large crowd"; Eric Fenby used to say the same thing, and it is impossible to disagree. The poet James Farrar put his finger on that aspect of it, I have always thought, eloquently summing up the situation for all Delius lovers when he spoke of "that strange personal poetry with which [we] just happen to be lucky enough to be in tune".

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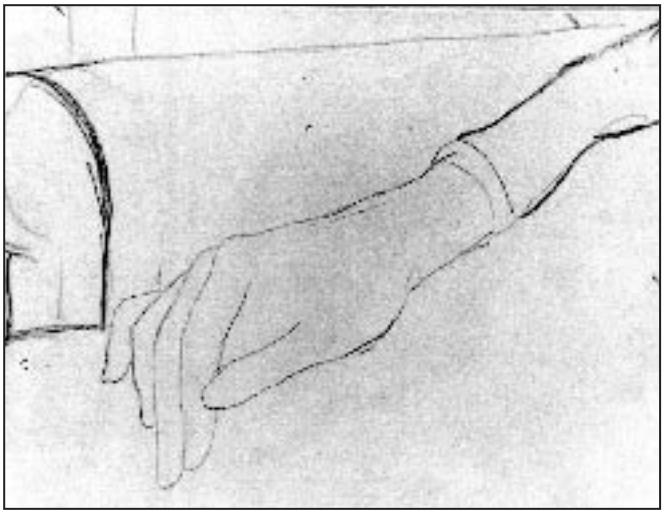

Delius's hand – Ernest Proctor (1929)
(Reproduced by courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery)

THE PERFECT MEMBER'S CAR NUMBER PLATE

Norman Jones

Living in Germany, as I do, one becomes used to the car registration system under which each city, town or district has an easily identifiable vehicle registration mark. So, for example in Hanover, where I have lived for the past 30-odd years, every registration plate starts with the letter "H", followed by a hyphen, and then by one or two other letters, then three or four digits. Other examples are "B" for Berlin, "M" for München (Munich), "K" for Köln (Cologne), "D" for Düsseldorf, etc. Some cities on the North Sea and Baltic coast have a combination of two letters to signify their membership of the old Hansa association of ports, similar I think to the Cinque ports association at home in the UK. Such examples would be "HH" for Hansastadt Hamburg, "HB" for Hansastadt Bremen, "HL" for Hansastadt Lübeck. Smaller cities, medium-sized towns and rural areas have identifying letters such as "PE" for Peine, "QLB" for Quedlingburg, and "STH" for Stadthagen.

Looking idly one day through a list of initial letters of car registrations, I came across the letters "FD" for the city of Fulda. "FD"? Those initials seemed to have a special significance - of course, Frederick Delius! A few moments' reflection suggested that in this city and the surrounding area there must be many combinations with following letters that would be of interest to Delians. For example, FD -EF (Eric Fenby), FD - TB (Thomas Beecham), FD - JR (Je1ka Rosen), FD - EE (Edward Elgar), FD - PG (Percy Grainger), FD - PW (Peter Warlock), FD - PH (Philip Heseltine) etc.,

etc. Thus inspired, I travelled the 100 miles or so south to Fulda with my German friend and my camera. We drove around the streets and car-parks in search of promising material. Amost all vehicles had the first two letters desired, but so many had unrecognisable follow-up combinations. THEN, parked in front of a house in a side-street, I saw a car plate that made my eyes open wide - there it was: FD - JR 46'4! I shouted "Stop" to my partner, who was driving, and she slammed on the brakes. After winding down the window, I took two photos: FD - JR - Frederick Delius - Jelka Rosen, what could be better! Later, I found VW Go1f with my initials on the plate in addition to the FD, FD – NJ, but out of modesty I refrained from taking a picture. Still later I found a car with the combination FD - EE. Yes, good! Edward Elgar - they had met once at Grez. Up to now I have not been able to find the number 464 to have any significance in the Delius history, but perhaps some other Member of the Society may know of a connection.

It is pleasant to speculate on, or muse over other combinations of letters and numbers, indicating his date of birth, marriage and death. They must be somewhere being driven around in Fulda. A lovely combination would he "FD - JR 1903" (the year of their marriage). Perhaps two of the very nicest combinations would be with the registration marks for Hamelin (HM) and Böblingen (BB) thus producing "FD - HM" Frederick Delius - Heavenly Music, and "FD - BB" - Frederick Delius – Britain's Best!

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DELIUS ON MASTERMIND

BBC2 TV on 30 August 2005

Godfrey Newham

On the 10 May, I sat in the famous black chair in Granada's Manchester studios, facing John Humphreys and a barrage of questions on 'The Life and Works of Frederick Delius' for Round One of BBC's 'Mastermind'. Two days later, I rang and asked our Editor if an article about my experience would be appropriate. His immediate response was 'Did you win?', his tone implying that to a self-respecting Society member, any other outcome would have been unthinkable.

Yes, I had won the round. It was not merely a pleasant surprise, it felt right. To me, the main inspiration of Delius's life is the triumph of hard work over a natural self-indulgence (without sacrificing too much of the latter). Getting onto the programme had been easy enough: a short application form, then an interview to assess my enthusiasm for my chosen subjects, proneness to nerves, and ability to answer general knowledge questions. After being accepted for the programme, my first idea was just to 'go along and have a go', but on reflection I decided to follow the Delius model and do lots of work. I was relying on the BBC's question compilers being unlikely to sift through *Delius: A Life in Letters* as thoroughly as I was prepared to. Why would they want to? A simple question like 'Which conductor helped Delius choose the passages by Nietzsche for his composition *A Mass of Life*?' still sounds impressively esoteric to the non-Delian.

In the end I probably overdid the homework bit. During the previous month I had read through all the letters and Lionel Carley's supporting text, extracting any possible information that could be shaped into a question. My wife acted as practice Senior Quizmaster, with an Assistant neighbour ringing me up occasionally to ask me the address of William Molard's Paris studio, or the reason for D's trip to Berlin in April 1912… A week before the recording I had assembled a portfolio of nearly 200 questions, most of which I felt able to answer without too much head scratching.

It's still a mystery to me why the process of finding out every scrap of information about an admired author or artist is so very rewarding: I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of the time I spent re-reading and extracting details from A Life in Letters. No doubt I could, with a little fore- thought, have omitted things like dates of premieres, but it was all fascinating.

And it changed my perspective on the composer's life in some significant ways. No, after his marriage to Jelka, Delius didn't really settle down to a quiet, relaxing life in Grez. There were many tiring promotional tours, conducting tours, visits to publishers, holidays abroad, and (from 1910 onwards) journeys to sanatoria in Germany or Scandinavia. And even when at home, there was the bulk of correspondence with publishers, agents, conductors, and friends, as well as the actual work of composition. And visits, many visits, from his friends and acquaintances. Despite declining health, his love and warmth for his close friends shines through the correspondence, and there appears to have been only one incident – a

visit by Bax and Harriet Cohen in April 1934 – when extreme ill health and fatigue forced him to decline to give hospitality.

Was Thomas Beecham really the main champion of Delius's music in England after 1907? These letters suggested to me that, within the composer's lifetime, he was just one among many: Delius was always complimentary about Beecham's performances, but was often equally effusive in his thanks for the various performances of Boult, Henry Wood and Barbirolli.

So I entered Granada Studios that evening feeling as fully prepared as I could be. The general knowledge section was pure pot-luck; no preparation was possible. The only part I felt unsure about was the 'impromptu' chat with John Humphreys before the general knowledge. This was obviously put into the show to provide the 'human touch' felt to be lacking in the glacial academic approach of Magnus Magnusson.

This chat section may well be relaxing for the contenders, but it doesn't make for great television. John Humphreys usually seems rather bored by it; no doubt he'd rather be grilling some unfortunate politician. Nor is it impromptu: a BBC researcher had talked with me on the phone for over half an hour about Delius and his music, just to get some themes for John Humphreys' prompt cards. There could have been an opportunity here to promote the Delius cause, but I felt it didn't succeed. Humphreys, obviously unenthusiastic about Delius, led me down the thorny path of assessing the composer's ranking and historical importance, and we never got onto discussing those things that make his music great. The interview lasted a rather painful five minutes, and was fortunately pruned to two minutes for the transmission.

Here are the specialist questions I faced. I'm sure many Journal readers will have no difficulty answering all 17 of them!:

With which teacher and conductor did FD have violin lessons in Chemnitz and later at the Leipzig Conservatorium?

Where in Middlesex was the International College which FD attended for three years after leaving Bradford Grammar School?

FD composed both a melodrama and a symphonic poem based on which poem by Henrik Ibsen?

About which English composer did FD remark, 'He'd have set the whole

Bible to music if he'd lived long enough'?

From which of his vocal works did FD take music for his Idyll on Whitman's Once I Passed through a Populous City?

What was the name of the orange plantation in Florida where FD lived from 1884-5?

Whose painting, entitled 'Nevermore', did FD buy in 1898, but was later forced to sell around 1932 owing to financial circumstances?

Which work for chorus and orchestra included a divided chorus in which Christians sing 'Alleluia' in competition with a Muslim section 'La Il Allah'?

What was the surname of the sisters May and Beatrice, who gave the first performance of FD's Double Concerto in 1920?

Which conductor helped FD choose the passages by Friedrich Nietzsche for his composition A Mass of Life?

In which of his works did he attempt to use human voices to represent 'man in nature', according to a letter to Norman O'Neill in 1920?

Whose setting of the folksong Brigg Fair inspired FD to write an orchestral version, subtitled An English Rhapsody?

What was the name of the conductor who did so much to champion FD's music in Germany, beginning with the premiere of Over the Hills and Far Away?

Which orchestral work, subtitled Once upon a Time, includes shouts offstage by members of the orchestra?

Which celebrated dramatist was remembered by FD in a memoir published in The Sackbut in 1920?

Delius's amanuensis Eric Fenby was a fellow Yorkshireman. From which town did he come?

Which of FD's compositions ends with a setting of 'Oh, honey, I am going down the river in the morning'?

Taking part in Mastermind has been an enjoyable and challenging experience in itself, and has helped both to consolidate and to modify some of my ideas about the composer and his music.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 2005

It having been decided that the programme at the Worcester Three Choirs Festival did not warrant having the Annual General Meeting there this year, it was held instead, on Saturday 13 August. at the New Cavendish Club in London. Over 60 Members, mostly over-60s, attended, and - very largely because of meticulous planning by Ann Dixon, the Secretary - it proved to be an excellent occasion. Drinks and then a delicious lunch preceded the Meeting, which (unlike those of some societies) passed off, under the amiable chairmanship of Roger Buckley, without so much as one cross word. He, and the Chairmen of the Midlands and West of England Branches, gave their respective Reports, and Stewart Winstanley the Treasurer's Report, and it was clear that the Society is currently in very good heart, with nearly 500 Members, a wide variety of activities, and a healthy bank balance. The Chairman announced that, in accordance with the Rules, the Committee had unanimously appointed Lionel Carley as the new President of the Society in the place of Felix Aprahamian, and that news was received with general acclaim. The Society's Rule 23 was altered to reduce the number of Members needed to form a quorum at formal meetings; the Committee was (with the exception of Ron Prentice, who, to everyone's regret, wished to retire) re-elected *en bloc*; and Messers Baldwin & Co were re-appointed as the Society's Auditors.

After the Meeting, the winners of the 2004 Delius Prize, David Worswick and Neil Georgeson, gave a recital consisting of a good performance of Delius's *Third Violin Sonata*, followed by a piece that could not have been more different - an astonishing piece of virtuoso dexterity by Castelnuovo Tedesco. An enjoyable day.

DELIANA WANTED

If any Member has unwanted full- or study-scores of any of the major Delius works for sale, I would be glad to hear from him or her. Ed.

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY CONCERT – 7 DECEMBER 1922
The third performance of *The Song of the High Hills*

[Brahms's *Song of Destiny*] was finely sung and raggedly played. It was the only reasonable music the choir had to sing. To say this is not to based on any appeal to reason. Delius asks no more than that we should enjoy the sound he makes, and we do. We may tire of it, for he goes making the same sound for a long time, consciously avoiding direct contrast. One begins to feel that more of that kind of orchestral sound would become unbearably luscious when the choir, singing without words, take on the choir had to sing. To say this is not to disparage Delius's "Song of the High Hills", which is not up the tale, and its rhapsody, sung with a fine tone, was a revelation.
The Times, 8/12/22

In [Scriabin's *Prometheus*] the chorus sings only vowels – as it does in Delius's "Song of the High Hills". It seems to me that choruses cannot possibly take the same interest in singing "Ah" and "Oh" than they do in singing words, however devoid of literary merit. "The Song of the High Hills" has beautiful moments and it was beautifully played, but it just wanders on, and seems to get nowhere and stops without any reason.
The Star, 8/12/1922

Mr. Delius's "Song of the High Hills" spoke, in richly sombre language, of threatening weather and the bitterness of solitude in wasteplaces……..The programme was, of course, designed to give an evening's work to the Philharmonic Chorus, which again proved its utility as a servant of musical ideals – not a common function among choral societies.
The Morning Post, 8/12/1922

The Delius work came out even better than on its introduction. It suffers a little from the rise of the strings and this composer's addiction to two-bar phrases, both features tending towards monotony, but this does not impair the sing-
gular beauty of much of the texture.
Pall Mall Gazette, 8/12/1922

On the other hand, anyone would have to be strangely lacking in musical sensibility who failed to discover in [all three works] beauty and imagination, however different the expression of those qualities in each case. How different, for instance, the expression of the note of quiet, meditative exaltation in the splendid "Schicksalslied" on the one hand and in the ineffably lovely work of Delius on the other! The performance of the former was less completely satisfying than that which followed of the native example, though the Philharmonic Choir, which undeniably goes from strength to strength, must take credit for the command it revealed of dynamic contrasts, as well as pure, evenly balanced choir, part tone. In Delius's work the icularly the sopranos, gave us some very beautiful effects of soft, sustained singing in one of the most striking passages of that masterly score.
The Daily Telegraph, 8/12/1922

DELIUS SOCIETY MEETINGS

LONDON BRANCH MEETING

New Cavendish Club, London on 15 March 2005

Deliusand Elgar: Triumphs and Tragedies
A talk by Ian Lace

Ian Lace began by reminding the audience that both Delius and Elgar were complex characters. He had been told by Carice Elgar Blake (Elgar's daughter) that she had known everyone portrayed in the *Enigma Variations*, and disliked them all except Troyte! What was the meaning of this amazing statement? He felt that most of the *Variations* depicted friends of Elgar's wife, Alice, as she was apparently not supportive of many of his own friends. Perhaps the *Variations* were a way of Elgar getting back at his wife's friends by characterising them in ways which were not entirely complimentary!

The main intention behind the talk was to point out the great similarities between the two composers. Reflecting on the meeting that the two had at Delius' home at Grez in 1934 - Elgar had flown to Paris and then driven the 80 mile return journey to Grez with Fred Gaisberg of EMI in a taxi! - it was amazing that these two great English composers had not met before. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that each had previously regarded the other's music rather coolly. However, the meeting was a revelation. Both composers afterwards recorded what a wonderful experience it had been to meet, even at such a late time in life. Although they both had barely a year left to live, a lively correspondence developed between them, and an exchange of music and recordings. Delius even considered a trip to London - by aeroplane! It was intriguing to hear which Elgar works were admired by Delius and they included the *Introduction and Allegro for Strings*, *Falstaff* and the *Nursery Suite*! We already knew of Delius' attitude to Elgar's religious music from Fenby's account of the last years of Delius' life. However, what was more intriguing was Elgar's attitude to Delius' music, and the preconception that since Elgar was *presumed* to be extremely religious he would naturally have an antagonistic view of, for example the *Mass of Life*. Quite the contrary! He actually considered it a

work of genius.

Ian then went on to discuss the similarities between the two composers' music, and used as an illustration their descriptions of London (Elgar's *Cockaigne)* and Paris (Delius's *Paris, Song of a great city)* respectively. We heard an excerpt from the beginning of *Cockaigne* and how the music illustrated Elgar's Edwardian London at the beginning of the 20th century. The music that Delius wrote for *Paris,* written two years before *Cockaigne,* was more introspective although it did illustrate the hedonistic atmosphere of Paris at the turn of the century, a time when it was undoubtedly the artistic and cultural capital of the world. Interestingly, *Paris* had received virtually no performances in France.

Then the composers' wives, and the crucial support they gave to their respective husbands. Both were extremely intelligent and artistic, and gave valuable criticism, where needed, to their husbands' compositions. Indeed, it is not an unreasonable suggestion to make that neither composer would have achieved greatness without their wives' unstinting support. Another similarity between the composers was, by its very nature, much more tenuous and much more open to speculation. According to recent biographers, the great love of Elgar's life was not his wife, but Helen Weaver. She was very musical, and indeed studied the violin in Leipzig Although they were briefly engaged, it was clear that the Weaver family felt that a penniless composer, as Elgar was in the late 1880s, was just not good enough for Helen. The engagement was therefore quickly broken off, and she eventually emigrated to New Zealand. This caused Elgar enormous anguish and despair, but he soon met and married his pupil, Alice Roberts, the daughter of a Major General, and embarked on his inexorable rise to fame. Elgar heard about the birth of Helen's children in New Zealand just before he began composition of the *Enigma Variations* and this apparently caused him enormous heartache. Indeed, it has been suggested that it is she who is depicted, as well as Lady Mary Lygon, in the *Romanza* variation. We also heard a short excerpt from Tasmin Little's description of Delius' return to Florida in 1897 to try and find his negro mistress, who was alleged to have born him a son about eight years earlier. Tragically, whether this story is true or not, he was unable to find her, as she had fled thinking that Delius wanted to reclaim the child. Clearly Ian Lace felt that these tragic love affairs had a great influence on the music of the respective composers. In the case of Delius, this was especially true of

the *Violin Concerto* and the *Songs of Sunset.* The transience of life and love? In Elgar's case it was *Dream Children* and the third movement of the *Second Symphony,* which seemed to epitomise the anguish and desolation that he felt after his rejection by Helen Weaver and the birth of her children.

Both composers were, of course, greatly influenced by the countryside and their surroundings. In the case of Elgar it was the countryside around Malvem and the counties of Hereford and Worcester. For Delius the influence was much wider, from the orange groves of Florida, to the mountains of Norway, to the blasted heaths of the Yorkshire moors, and finally his idyllic home near Fontainebleau; he maintained his love of England right to the end of his life, insisting that he should be buried in an English churchyard.

Finally, the respective faiths of Delius and Elgar. At first sight there were not many similarities, but Elgar did not just pay lip-service to conventional church-based religion, and was much more wide-ranging and humanistic - not too far, in fact, from what we understand to be Delius' beliefs and the world of Nietzsche. Indeed, Elgar's decision to be cremated and not to receive the last sacraments when on his deathbed, seemed to suggest that his faith in the Catholic Church had been brought seriously into question.

Roger Buckley gave an eloquent vote of thanks for what was an excellent and perceptive lecture. Although the audience was rather small, those that there were able to attend were well-rewarded and felt that he had covered both the *Triumphs and Tragedies* of the two composers extremely well. We also went away feeling, I am sure, a strong sense of regret that Delius and Elgar, actually both very similar characters, had not become friends during the years of their great compositions. Surely, such a friendship would have provided great inspiration to the burgeoning revival of English Music at the beginning of the 20th century.

David Green

WEST OF ENGLAND BRANCH MEETING

The Mill, Ash Priors, Taunton on 9 April 2005:

London 1915— British Music in the Great War
A talk by Anthony Lindsey

It's not that I'm anti-royalist or anything, but I can't help thinking that it was a shade inconsiderate of the Prince of Wales and his bride to get married on the same day as a Delius meeting. As you can imagine, this coincidence had an adverse affect on the numbers attending the latter event. I've been asked not to say exactly how many of us turned up at Ron's place lest it make the West of England Branch into a laughing stock (which heaven forbid!), but Tony Lindsey was not in the least bit put out, and it was agreed by common consent that our gathering was both 'cosy' and 'select': in fact we all had a thoroughly good time.

This talk was the third of a trilogy: the first two, which we have already enjoyed at previous meetings, were 'Delius: a Layman's Approach' and 'Delius: His Friends and Associates'. The theme this time centred on the 1915 Festival of British Music and covered a wide range of composers, some of whom were old at the time of the First World War, some young, and some, like George Butterworth, sadly lost their lives in the conflict. Thus, they ranged from Mackenzie (don't hear much about him these days), Stanford, Parry and, of course, Elgar to Vaughan Williams, Bax and O'Neill.

We were treated to a rich and ample selection of musical illustrations. A few, like *Banks of Green Willow* and *Chanson de Matin* were well known pieces — others were, for me at least, an education. I didn't realise that Albert Sammons, the famous violinist, was also a composer – until Tony (or Ron rather, because he was operating the hi-fi) played his *Intermezzo, Op 21*. Hamilton-Harty's *Londonderry Air* was a beautiful version for divided strings that rivals Percy Grainger's more familiar arrangement. Other highlights (for me) were Stanford's gentle *Magniflcat in G*, the finale of Frank Bridge's *The Sea* and part of Vaughan Williams' s moving elegy for viola and orchestra, *Flos Campi.* Delius himself was represented by the third movement of the *Piano Concerto* in a superb performance by Moiseiwitsch. Two noteworthy curiosities were O'Neill's *Hornpipe* and a piano piece by Bax intriguingly entitled *In a Vodka Shop*. All in all, it was a

most illuminating and enjoyable talk.

During the break, the usual selection of mouth-watering cakes was on offer. At some stage during the proceedings, Ron showed off his new MP3 player, which, for those of you who are still living in the twentieth century, looks like an electric razor and holds digital downloads of your entire CD collection. (Amazing. I'm jealous.)

Everybody thanked everybody else – with special thanks going to Tony Lindsey who had come a long way to entertain and instruct such a tiny (whoops! – cosy and select) audience, and Ron and Brenda for their generous hospitality. Actually, Brenda was not present, as she had another engagement – no, not the royal wedding: their daughter was playing in a concert.

Finally we bade a sad farewell to Ray and Brenda Osborne who will shortly be leaving these shores to take up residence in France. You can't get much more Delian than that.

Tony Watts

MIDLANDS BRANCH MEETING

Ravensdale, Weston Underwood, Derbyshire on 9 April 2005

Delius – a young person's view
Presented by James Baker and Joanna O'Connor

This was similar to, but not identical with, James and Joanna's evenings for the London and West Country Branches. We were treated to a sequence of music introducing poems (some with Delian connections and some without), and scenes from *The School for Scandal*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Under the Greenwood Tree* and *Jane Eyre.*

The evening was quite different from anything we have had before, and the audience were very impressed with the originality of the presentation.

Richard Kitching

LONDON BRANCH MEETING

New Cavendish Club, London on 19 April 2005

Delius and Fenby: A Photographic Journey

A talk by Lyndon Jenkins and Paul Guinery

A large audience assembled to hear two very familiar speakers talk about their collaboration on a new book, then just published and on the point of being distributed to members. The original idea had been that of our former Chairman Rodney Meadows, who one evening, following a concert at Symphony Hall in Birmingham, suggested to Lyndon Jenkins that it might be useful to have a pictorial supplement to Eric Fenby's *Delius as I knew him*, which would include portraits of visitors to the composer at Grez during Eric's six year period there.

After Rodney's death, Lyndon approached the Committee with the suggestion that a part of his legacy to the Society could be used to bring this project to fruition. This was approved as a worthy use of Rodney's gift. Lyndon secured the services of Paul Guinery as collaborator and, a year later, the project was complete. Much reference was of course made to *Delius as I knew him*, but the authors were aware that Eric was occasionally vague about dates, and they found other sources, especially the second volume of Lionel Carley's *Delius: A Life in Letters*, invaluable. Some of the photographs collected are well known, but others have rarely been seen before. Mostly over seventy years old, and many of them snapped by amateurs, they are of variable quality and must have a presented a considerable challenge to the technical expertise of Paul Brooks, the *Journal*'s producer, who is responsible also for the page-setting and design of the new book.

Very shortly after Eric arrived in Grez in October 1928, Delius received a visit from the 'cellist Alexandre Barjansky. Eric was immediately pressed into service as accompanist in the 'Cello Sonata and the piano reduction of the 'Cello Concerto. This must have been something of a baptism of fire for the young man. In the nearly six years between his arrival in October 1928 and Delius's death in July 1934, he was to spend 35 months in Grez, plus a further five months caring for the widowed Jelka and organising the reinterment of Delius's remains at Limpsfield in May 1935. The first

picture in the book, then, shows Barjansky and his wife boating on the Loing with Jelka. As Lyndon and Paul gave the audience a foretaste of the book, images from it were projected on a screen for all to see. Delius's next visitor in 1928 was Balfour Gardiner, who returned many times over the years; another regular visitor was Norman O'Neill, whom Eric met at his visit early in 1929. Philip Heseltine was also a frequent visitor, while Roger Quilter, of whom Delius was particularly fond, visited only once in Eric's time. Another friend to whom Delius was devoted was, of course, Percy Grainger, who appears in this collection with his new wife Ella and Jelka. Facing each other on the next two pages are Sir Thomas Beecham and Dora Labbette (whose later professional name was Lisa Perli, the surname a playful mock-Italianate reference to her place of birth in Surrey); as is well known, their collaboration extended into areas other than music-making.

The evening progressed with images and anecdotes from the authors and occasional interjections from the audience. A real 'find' was a photograph of Halfden Jebe; and the very next one in the book is of Frederic Austin. There was a round of applause for our Editor, Martin Lee-Browne, Austin's grandson, in recognition of the striking family resemblance. From the audience, Alan Rowlands suggested that the husband and wife piano duo Ethel Bartlett and Rae Robertson had arranged Delius's late work *Fantastic Dance* – one of the pieces dictated to Fenby – for two pianos. This was thought unlikely, but is in fact perfectly true: the arrangement was published by Boosey and Hawkes in 1936. Alan – a pupil of John Ireland – also recognised the portrait of Helen Perkin, dedicatee of the Ireland Violin Concerto, who with André Mangeot visited Delius in 1933 and played his third Violin Sonata to him. He had also met Norah Scott-Turner, who visited Delius in 1933 to sing for him: she had been a friend of Maria Donska, another of his teachers. Paul told us that the visit is featured in an interview with her which is preserved in the BBC Sound Archive. Unfortunately, no photograph of her had been found for inclusion in the book. A smouldering Harriet Cohen, accompanied by a possibly diffident Arnold Bax, are pictured; accompanied by Walter Legge, they arrived without notice at Grez in 1934. Delius, affronted by this lapse of etiquette, refused to see them!

In the second half, Paul began by explaining the chronology that, following Lyndon's introduction, begins the book and the various

difficulties he had encountered in compiling it. He paid tribute to Robert Threlfall who had helped him to unravel references to the various suites from *Hassan*, of which there were at least three. Portraits of Delius's neighbours were shown, followed by contemporary pictures of the house and garden. Your reviewer remarked that there is a pile of piano rolls to be seen on the Ibach piano – conceivably the Duo-Art rolls of his music recorded by Grainger and Leopold, which were sent to Delius to sample on the Weber player piano lent to him by the Aeolian Company.

This was a thoroughly interesting meeting, and unusual in that not a note of music was played; members who were not present missed a treat but they now have the book and can also benefit, whenever they wish, from the enterprise and scholarship of our two speakers.

Roger Buckley

While on the subject of food, a story is told about the English composer Frederick Delius (1862-1934). He had the habit of cooking his own food in the dressing rooms of concert halls because he didn't trust anyone else to cook for him. As the delicious aromas permeated the hall, members of the orchestra and the staff of the venue would be drawn to Delius's dressing room and he would explain what he was doing. Often, the great composer would have up to thirty people watching his culinary artistry. His first public performance of *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* was accompanied by a distinct whiff of kedgeree.

In the days before television, Delius's cookery demonstrations became as eagerly awaited as the performance of the concert itself. So, he can lay claim to being the first 'celebrity chef'. Unfortunately, nobody knows if this is a true story, or whether it's a Delius myth...

Terry Wogan – Sunday Telegraph 25 September 2005

RETROSPECTIVE BOOK REVIEW

In DSJ 137, it was suggested that a Member might like to write a review of one of the celebrated books which are in many Delian's libraries, as if it had been first published this year. Paul Chennell has obliged.

DELIUS AS I KNEW HIM

Eric Fenby, Faber, 1981

Anyone who wishes to know how creative artists of any kind go about the production of great art – in whatever format – will surely find in this book an extraordinary narrative which tells of the end of one life and the beginnings of another. These are the lives of two remarkable men – Frederick Delius and Eric Fenby. We know from Fenby himself that he wrote the book relatively quickly, and there is no attempt at any elaborate literary creation. This is a straightforward piece of reportage of a high order. The scenes and characters described remain vivid in our memory. The story Fenby tells us is both moving and inspiring.

The book deals with the last six years of Delius's life. We are given a vivid description of the life in the Delius household, and of his various neighbours and friends. A description is given of how Delius worked with Fenby on the last works. Some pieces which remained unfinished in 1928, were completed by Delius with Fenby's help, and others were wholly prepared by them together. We are given, most movingly, a description of the final days of Delius's life. This must have been painful for Fenby to recall. And indeed, we know from the Memoir of Ernest Newman produced by his wife Vera Newman, that Fenby told Newman that he wanted to forget his time at Grez but could not.

After first reading this book we are left with the impression that Fenby spent long periods between 1928 and 1934 in Grez. However, as Lyndon Jenkins and Paul Guinery have pointed out in their recent book *Delius & Fenby A Photographic Journey*, he was at Grez for no more than 33 months between 1928 and 1934. Delius's biography interests us because of his musical achievements, his wide circle of friends and acquaintances – musical and non-musical, and his place in the development of English and European music at the beginning of the 20th century. Fenby presents us with a description of Delius as a dominant personality around whom

the household revolves. It has always surprised me that the events described in this book have not inspired novelists.* I would have thought the material here would form the basis of a novel which examines the role of the creative artist and the forces that drive his creativity.

Why should we regard this as an extraordinary narrative? Well, anyone interested in the act of artistic creation should read Fenby's gripping and memorable narrative to see how creativity can be successful after much personal struggle against all odds. Few of us would respond to a disabling illness with the stoicism and determination of Delius. In Part Two of this book, Fenby explained how he helped Delius complete various works by taking musical dictation from the composer. These late works are some of Delius's finest achievements. Their completion when the composer has such major impairments is extraordinary if not unique. Fenby provides us with a vivid analysis of Delius's working methods.

Why does this book stick in the memory? We are impressed by the fact that a very young man is able to live with, and work for, an outstanding creative artist who has profound disabilities. This extraordinary book explains how Delius is determined to complete his work in the face of adversity. Surely much scholarship since the publication of this book has revealed a great deal more about the life and work of Delius; however, the vivid essential facts of the composer's life are laid before us here. The conclusion of the book is haunting. Fenby reveals himself as a person of great humanity, kindness and great compassion.

Why should you read this book? If like me you are fascinated by what compulsion makes a composer write music, then read this book to observe the extraordinary powers that drive a man with a major illness, which will kill him, to carry on writing beautiful and great music. Delius's stoicism is overwhelming. Fenby writes a moving account of his time with Delius which is difficult to forget once you have read it.

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* See Roy Frederick's "bitlets" in the Book & CD Reviews & Notes which follow. Neither author knew what the other had written.

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM CONDUCTS DELIUS

Orchestral Works Volume *4. Marche Caprice* (recorded 19 December 1946), *Brigg Fair* (26 November 1946), *North Country Sketches* (14 February 1949), *Over the Hills and Far Away* (7 February 1950), *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* (8 May 1948 & 19 December 1946), *Dance Rhapsody No 1* (29 October 1952): Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham. Playing time: 76'12"; Naxos 8.110984

With Naxos's more-or-less chronological reissuing of Sir Thomas Beecham's Delius recordings, Volume 4 reaches the years 1946-1952. The orchestra is now the Royal Philharmonic, which gave its first concert in September 1946 and then went on to provide the backbone for the second Delius Festival that began just over a month later. All the works on this CD were performed at that Festival: *Marche Caprice* was played in the sixth concert and recorded a month later, *Brigg Fair* was in the fourth concert and recorded eleven days later. The other works had to wait much longer to be committed to disc.

Marche Caprice is the only recording to make its first appearance on CD, its only previous reissue being in the World Records LP boxed set SHB54. The versions we have here of *Brigg Fair, On Hearing the First Cuckoo* and *Dance Rhapsody No 1* were included on Dutton CDLX7028 (not currently available), while these performances of *North Country Sketches* and *Over the Hills and Far Away* have both been twice issued on CD by SONY. All the above recordings started life as 78s and the first two betray that origin. The listener is aware of the needle in the groove, even a slightly worn groove, and the upper frequencies cut. Dutton achieved a much cleaner transfer of *Brigg Fair* in 'Beecham conducts Delius: The RPO Legacy Volume 2'. With the other works there is very little difference in sound quality between this new CD and the other releases. One needs hardly comment on the performances which must be familiar to most readers. They are self-recommending. One might just add that *Dance Rhapsody No 1* has surely never been bettered on disc (there has also been an EMI CD issue of this recording), and if anyone does not already have it this CD is worth buying just for the final variation with solo violin. It is just as well

that the variations are not individually cued as one would be tempted to replay repeatedly that single section.

Naxos seem to have been fairly comprehensive in reissuing Beecham's commercial Delius recordings. Some, like the non-commercial Leeds Festival recordings and hitherto unissued studio takes, have been released by others, notably SOMM, but Naxos have by-passed the 1935 *Summer Night on the River.* There are still a fair number of recordings from the years 1946-1952 yet to come – perhaps in Volume 5 – but other recordings that were issued on LP by World Records that do not seem to have reached CD yet are the 1938 *La Calinda* from the *Florida* Suite (as opposed to the *Koanga* version), the 1948 Prelude to Part 2 of *A Mass of Life,* and the unaccompanied wordless chorus from *Hassan* that had the distinction of being played at the 1934 Delius Memorial Concert as part of a *Hassan* Suite.

Readers who have the other volumes in this series need have no hesitation in adding this one to their collection. Anyone who does not may, for under a flyer, like to sample this CD**.**

Stephen Lloyd

DELIUS, ELGAR & HOLST PART-SONGS

'Covermount' CD for BBC Music Magazine, April 2005
Includes *To be sung of a Summer Night on the River 1 & 2, Midsummer Song and 4 of Six Partsongs.* The BBC Singers, cond. Stephen Cleobury.

Sad to say, it is simply not worth the while of anyone who did not get this disc with their copy of the Magazine trying to hunt it down. The BBC Singers are a professional choir, with trained voices, their vibrati do not synchronise, and there seems to be no attempt to get them all to blend together. Throughout, not just in the Delius songs, they merely sing the notes, without any real feeling; the phrasing is wooden, and there is little or no sense of forward movement; the sound is often sour, the tenors can be lumpy and straining for the top notes; the beginning of Midsummer Song is a mess. Members can rest happily content with the excellent versions of all the Delius part-songs by The Elysian Singers (on Somm) and some of them by The Cambridge Singers (on Collegiate Records).
ML-B

H.BALFOUR GARDINER *by Stephen Lloyd*

This book, one of the best biographies of any of the early 20th century composers, is now (albeit sadly unrevised) available in a paperback edition.
ISBN-10:052161922X & ISBN-13:978051619226)
Cambridge University Press, price £23.99

SOME DELIAN 'BITLETS"

Roy Fredericks, a Member who is an avid reader of books, has sent in these notes, which may be of interest:

'Cloud Atlas" - A Novel By David Mitchell (publ. in Britain 2004)
It is made up of several sections in the form of narratives that would appear on the face of it to be unconnected. One of them concerns a reclusive English composer living in the 1930s in a backwater south of Bruges, who is nearly blind and crippled. The narrator, Frobisher, is inspired to visit the composer by a piece in *The Times*. Mitchell gives the composer the name of Vyvyan Ayrs and he has been unable to produce any new compositions due to his illness which is identified as syphilis. The Times in reviewing recently the composer's *Secular Magnificat* referred to many yet unfinished scores. Frobisher's intention, in visiting Ayrs, is to offer himself as his amanuensis. The house belonged to the composer's wife. On the first working morning, Ayrs addressed Frobisher: 'I've got a little melody rattling about my head. Let's see if you can take it down". Suddenly there was a 'Tar tar! Tar-tar-tar! Got that? Tar, tar, tar,tar etc." As the narrator left the room, he heard Ayrs say to his wife 'The boy can't take down a simple tune". But after things had improved Ayrs and his wife would invite Frobisher to listen with them to gramophone recordings of the composers major works conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. Reference is also made to Ayrs' 'Bible", *Also Sprach Zarathustra* and the conductor's dismissal of all English music.

Lullaby of Birdland – the autobiography the pianist George Shearing (publ.2004)

Delius was the favourite ' serious" composer of both Shearing and his frequent co-performer Mel Tormé. Shearing was, of course, born blind. He describes how he can try to visualise colour. If for example someone said 'Describe blue to me', he thinks of Delius 'who is very blue and calm most of the time'. Shearing also managed to work a quotation from *Brigg Fair* into his recording of *It might as well be Spring*. On the CD *An Elegant Evening* made by Shearing and Tormé, the latter sings (partly unaccompanied) a version of *Brigg Fair.*

The Attempted Rescue – the autobiography of Robert Aickman, the founder of the Inland Waterways Association (publ.2004), which includes this passage:

Beginning with a concert at which E J Moeran's Symphony was first played, Audrey started me on more systematic and selective music-seeking and, in particular, led me to the works of Delius, who has ever since been an excitement an inspiration, and reassurance to me equal (among composers) only to Wagner. Delius offers deep, mystical feeling without implications of conventional religion. He offers some of the most beautiful music it is possible to imagine, much more of it than is generally supposed, as he was fluent and versatile. He is, properly, no English miniaturist but a great composer on the international scale. Chopin's best works really are miniatures, but few deny that he is a world composer. Delius's links with other English music are, in fact, slender, and much exaggerated. As a man, he was only in part an Englishman. His idiom and feeling are quite unusually his own. He dissolves or soars above all barriers and opens up a prospect as boundless and as limitless as the universe or the soul. The poet Robert Nichols puts it well: 'Delius tells us that life is beautiful and brief and bitter and surrounded by mystery, that the beauty of the mystery is unfathomable and that we should do well to accept the mystery, first, because, if we don't, we shall lose some of the beauty, and, second, because it is becoming to human dignity to face with quiet resolution the inevitable conditions of any human happiness whatever.

THE COLLECTED LETTERS OF PHILIP HESELTINE (Peter Warlock)

Edited by Barry Smith. 4 Volumes. ISBN-1:843830809. The Boydell Press (www.boydellandbrewer.com.) 2005.
Price £200
(£150 to Members of the British Music Society & The Delius Society)

This is a magnificent set of books, and from the reader's point of view, the only thing wrong with it is the price – even at the generous discounted rate! It is, however, a fact of life that publishing specialist works with a very limited potential readership is an extremely expensive business – and it is infinitely preferable to have titles such as The Boydell Press produces, albeit at considerable cost, than not at all. The only other disappointments are that only the last volume is indexed – it would be very helpful to have an index for each volume – and that in the last three volumes there are no footnotes explaining who people who have 'appeared' in previous ones are, so that it is quite a business going back to find the first reference to them. Otherwise, the set is beautifully produced, with a very attractive 1920's style label on the front covers, a brief introduction to the events in Heseltine's life year by year – and the letters look good on the page.

Born in the Savoy Hotel, Heseltine lived a complicated, emotional and colourful Bohemian life – and his overall character is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the word 'I' seems to appear, sometimes several times, in most sentences of most of the letters. His father died when he was only two, and he treated a number of people as substitutes or props against his patent lack of confidence in himself – in particular his music teacher at Eton, Colin Taylor, the poet Robert Nichols, the composer Bernard van Dieren, the critic Cecil Gray and Delius – to whom, and his mother, most of the letters were written. During the Great War, he became very involved with D H Lawrence, but their relationship came to an acrimonious end. He was a coward, in that he moved to Ireland in 1917 to avoid conscription, rather than registering as a concientious objector – but on the credit side, however, there was a notable generosity of spirit towards Delius, for whom he corrected proofs and made piano arrangements of several works, apparently for no payment but simply out of friendship; in later years, though, he was critical of Delius's music to others. A significant figure in the London artistic scene throughout his

life, he adopted the alternative name 'Peter Warlock' in 1916 – as Barry Smith says in his Introduction ' Bearing in mind all its associations (the word ' warlock' can mean conjurer, demon, enchanter, magician, sorcerer, witch or wizard), it is significant that he should have chosen this particular pseudonym'.

The letters are often very long, and sometimes inordinately so - particularly those to Delius, with whose music he had became obsessed whilst still a teenager, and who became not only his greatest friend, but probably his most influential father-figure (although the clergyman who was trying to 'tutor' Heseltine for entry to Oxford thought, probably quite wrongly, that Delius was a bad influence on him). He mainly wrote about his career (or rather his indecision as to what to do), his clothes, God and Life, sex, philosophy, motor-cycling and cars, a very wide variety of literature, and his reactions to the huge amount of mainly post-Beethoven music that he heard in concerts and at the opera. Many letters between 1912 and 1915 were to his main girl-friend Olivia Smith (and there were others too), but virtually none to his wife Puma - by whom he had a child before their marriage in 1916, and whom he virtually deserted not long after it.

Almost all the letters are from Heseltine, very few indeed to him – and it can either be frustrating not knowing what the other correspondent said, or amusing to try to work it out. Once one 'gets into' the books, and becomes familiar with Heseltine's very sophisticated, Puckish, but also cruel and almost warped, sense of humour, which was sometimes directed at other musicians (for example ' Mr Adam C. Arse' and ' the Reverend Edmund Horoscope [Horace] Phallus [Fellowes] of Windsor Castle') some of the letters are very funny – as are his many scurrilous limericks (although only a few of them appear in these letters).

Like most collections - if you can afford them, or persuade your local library to buy them - these books are 'for dipping-into' rather than going straight through, but they are a marvellous 'read'.

ML-B

FREDERICK DELIUS – A GUIDE TO RESEARCH

Mary Christison Huismann. Routledge Music Biographies,
Routledge (New York and London – www.routledge.co.uk) 2005
ISBN 0-415-94106-7pp 273, cover illustration, no text illustrations.

This is a new work of reference, taking as its justification the lack of an authoritative bibliographic study, the need for which was identified some years ago by Rachel Lowe, formerly the Archivist of the Delius Trust. The author acknowledges the fine catalogues of Rachel Lowe herself and of Robert Threlfall, and the work of the current Archivist, Lionel Carley. Stephen Lloyd's index to *Delius Society Journals* 1 to 100 is also warmly commended. She alludes to a bio-bibliography that was 'considered but not undertaken' – which remains a mystery – and expresses the hope that her work might 'fill the void.

The research was conducted by means of a search of printed and electronic databases, both locally in the author's Minneapolis working environment and in Jacksonville, at the Public Library and the University. In the course of her work, the author considered 'all substantial, relevant writings in English and the major European languages in all formats' published before the end of 2002. Preference was given in the final selection to 'those materials easily accessible through normal library and research methods'. The author, then, makes no claim that her work is comprehensive: it is explicitly selective, and should be judged on those terms.

The structure of the book places first a biographical sketch of Delius, with a chronology of his life and compositions, followed by a list of his compositions. The latter follows the scheme devised by Robert Threlfall. Next comes the bibliography itself, which is divided into five parts: source material, catalogues, collections of articles and essays, a selective list of publications in *The Delius Society Journal*, and secondary sources. This section is followed by a chapter on works that were inspired by, or dedicated to, Delius. A discography and indices complete the work; the latter will be invaluable to researchers, as indeed they are to the casual reader.

The reaction of the reviewer, faced with commenting constructively on a work of this type, is inevitably to look up specific items – possibly even obscure ones – to check that they have been included and accurately

represented. Mary Huismann's book passes this test; if there seem to be omissions (for example, there is no reference to Charles Farncombe's *From the High Solitudes* or *Paa Vidderne* films made for Norwegian television) it is necessary to recall the brief. Such items are not ' easily accessible through normal library and research methods' and therefore should not be expected to be listed in this work.

What of accuracy? Such a plethora of detail is here made available that it would be unnatural if the odd slip had not been made. One example will suffice. If the reader wishes to look up the 2001 DVD reissue of Ken Russell's film *Song of Summer*, paragraph 1137 summarises the details, but then directs the reader for reference to the original 1968 film to paragraph 1141. This, however, is concerned with the Yorkshire Television film *Song of Farewell*. The relevant paragraph is in fact 1142, which, mentioning the 2001 DVD, unfortunately refers the reader to 1142 (itself) rather than 1137. It also claims that Ken Russell narrated the film, which of course he did not. Such muddles are, of course, trivial and it may appear ungallant even to mention them, but a work of reference is always vulnerable to a charge of inaccuracy.

Mary Huismann has performed a major service for the many people for whom a Delius bibliography will be of interest. For the smaller number of scholars planning to carry out Delian research of their own, her book will join the select works that form an invaluable permanent resource. She has, bibliographically speaking, 'filled the void'.

Roger Buckley

SEA DRIFT

Saturday 21st May 2005 at Peterborough Cathedral: Roderick Williams (baritone), Stamford Choral Society, Chameleon Arts Orchestra, conducted by Paul White.

This concert by Stamford Choral Society was a memorable event, given in Peterborough Cathedral. As a member of both the Delius and Elgar Societies, I was delighted that they featured in the programme. I cannot claim to have similar devotion to the music of William Walton, but the performance of his *Belshazzar's Feast* was the best I have heard and went a long way towards converting me. Elgar provided a stirring opening to the concert with his second most popular *Pomp and Circumstance March,* Number 4, which gave the Chameleon Arts Orchestra an early opportunity to show the quality of their playing.

It was marvellous that they included *Sea Drift* in the programme. For many years I have admired the skill with which the Stamford forces adapt to many musical styles, and was delighted with the way they captured the unmistakable sound of Delius. They have often engaged well-known soloists, previously including famous singers such as Bryan Rayner Cook and Christopher Maltman. This concert was no exception, as the solo baritone was Roderick Williams, who is increasingly becoming a significant name in the musical world. I am sure that the audience appreciated his rich tones, and I look forward to hearing him again. The soloist and chorus gave a lovely, deeply moving performance of *Sea Drift,* combining sensitivity and drama.

I was pleased when, a few years ago, the Society started giving some of their concerts in Peterborough Cathedral, as the acoustics are far more appropriate for choral music than the more restricted sound produced in Stamford School Hall. Although Delius shunned religion, I suspect he would have approved the venue for this performance of *Sea Drift.* I hope that the warm reception they received from the audience will encourage the Society to include more Delius in future programmes. Dare I hope for *A Mass of Life* next year?

The second half of the concert began with Vaughan Williams's

arrangement of *Greensleeves,* which also sounded so right in the Cathedral. Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* requires very large forces, so there were additional musicians in the side aisles, and the Stamford Chorus was also augmented by members of Peterborough Choral Society. Orchestra; chorus and soloist were all encouraged to bring out all the drama and excitement of the score under the expert guidance of conductor, Paul White. A very happy evening.

Paul Limming

STRING QUARTET AND OTHER WORKS

5 June 2005 at Derwent Ridge, Weston Underwood, Derbyshire: The Chordiale String Quartet: *Ann Dixon & Pat Quirke (Violins), Wiebke Appel (Viola) and Hilary Brice (Cello), with Graham Parsons (Piano)*

The last time that the Delius *String Quartet* was played at a Midlands Branch meeting was on 10 April 1975, when the Ruggieri Quartet (members of the CBSO) came to our tenth anniversary concert by courtesy of Lyndon Jenkins. On that occasion, a blackbird joined in the performance during *Late Swallows.*

On this occasion, our indefatigable Secretary, Ann Dixon led the admirable Chordiale String Quartet. The concert began with Schubert' s *String Quartet in Eb* Op. 125 No. 1. It was amazing to learn from Ann's introduction that Schubert composed this work at the tender age of 16! This was followed by Delius's *Legende* played by Ann Dixon, accompanied by Graham Parsons. Ann said that she had chosen this piece for her finals at the Royal Academy of Music in 1966, thinking that the examiners would not know it; she was taken aback when she saw that Eric Fenby was one of them! She had initially suggested that, at this concert, I might like to accompany her, but after looking at the piano part on page 6, I put forward Graham' s name, and he made a splendid job of it.

In the interval, we had champagne kindly provided by John and Linda Graham. Suitably fortified, the Quartet then played the Delius

Quartet. This was new to the players (other than Ann) and they gave an excellent performance which showed how much hard work they had put in preparing the piece. Curiously, it transpired that the members of the Quartet preferred *Late Swallows* to the other movements of the *Quartet*. The blackbird failed to sing on this occasion, but this did not harm the performance!

Two violin solos by Ann Dixon ended the concert, *Chanson de Matin* by Elgar and a delightful *Bagatelle* by John Ireland. We then adjourned to and Graham and Gwen's lovely garden for sandwiches, strawberries and cream, and more champagne! The weather was sunny and warm, and this made a suitable ending to a lovely afternoon.

Richard Kitching

BROADCAST TALK

Classic FM, 12 June 2005:
'The part played by money in the lives of the great composers'.
A talk by John Suchet.

I was alerted (indirectly) to this programme by Midlands Branch member Michael White. I missed the beginning, so can only report upon the part I heard.

John Suchet is, of course (inter alia) Hercule Poirot in the TV series, and it would seem from his remarks during the programme that, in his opinion, Delius' s finest works are his choral pieces, that he is an enthusiastic Delian. The reference to money in the part I heard seemed limited to the allegation that Delius owned two houses, one at Grez and another at 8a Hobart Place, London. [Grez was in fact originally bought by Jelka, and Balfour Gardiner then bought it from her – while the London property was owned by Thomas Beecham, who quite often wrote to Delius from that address – e.g. on 14 June 1914 (see *Delius – A Life in Letters* by Lionel Carley Vol. 2)]. Delius also wrote several letters to Jelka from the same address (e.g. Carley pp.132 and 134). How Classic FM came to the conclusion that Delius owned the property, I cannot imagine.

The programme (or the part I heard) included *La Calinda*, *The Walk to the Paradise Garden, Oh Mensch! Gib Acht!* from *A Mass of Life*, *On hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, the *Serenade* from *Hassan* (played by Julian Lloyd Webber and John Lenahan) and *Summer Night on the River.* Eric Fenby' s work for Delius was mentioned, but none of Fenby's pieces were played.

Despite the odd factual error and that, in the main, only Delius' s most popular pieces were played, we must be very grateful to Classic FM for continuing to promote the cause of Delius when other stations show such little enthusiasm.

Richard Kitching.

LETTERS

From Tony Watts:

Bradford's Best

I feel I should make an effort to respond to your various pleas for constructive input concerning items in the last edition of the Journal —just in case no one else does.

Firstly, 'Bradford's Best 100'. I can think of no reasoned rationale for putting FD at No.23 any more than I can for putting Seabrook Crisps at No. *95.* It is much easier to make out a case for their being in random order. After all, on what basis could one possibly compare the respective merits of David Hockney and the Leeds-Bradford Airport? Or the Bums Unit at St. Luke's Hospital and The Man who broke the Bank at Monte Carlo? Number 100 (The People of Bradford) is the obvious exception— a special place reserved for the expression of civic pride and the conviction that 'us Yorkshire tykes' (as Eric Fenby might have said if Ken Russell's film is anything to go by) are more than a match for any list of celebrities you might care to come up with. But as for the other 99, I believe they have been placed in purely random order. Indeed I have to believe it: how else could I cope with the mental anguish of knowing that my favourite composer is held in less esteem than a packet of crisps?

For Deryck Cooke's defence of Delius, *Delius the Unknown* we should all, of course, be grateful. However, one thing puzzles me. In spite of his obvious enthusiasm for his subject, Cooke apparently accepts that Delius had a 'tendency towards amateurism'. Indeed he calls it an 'inescapable fact'. Unfortunately, he doesn't expand on this statement. So, could someone please explain to me in what sense a man with a high degree of self-discipline who was dedicated to his art can be guilty of 'amateurism'? If all it means is that he didn't write symphonies — then neither did Debussy (was he an amateur too?).

From Tony Noakes:

Tides of Taste

To my continuing disappointment, Delius's music is seldom heard on the Australian classical music channel, and the same has been the case of Radio 3 during the few weeks of my visit to England this year. A young Australian presenter horrified me by saying recently - influenced, perhaps, by the Aldeburgh faction - that "There wasn't much going on in English music between Purcell and Britten". I did get a letter of protest published in the guide to his programmes, pointing out that all the major composers - Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Holst and Walton, as well as Delius - were thereby consigned to insignificance!

And in a broadcast history of music series, when it came to the early 20th century, the only composers mentioned were Schönberg (four examples played), Stravinsky, Bartok and Shostakovich (two examples each), and Mahler and Debussy (one example each). This narrow focus is typical of a currently prevailing orthodoxy - Boulez's repertoire, for example - that excludes so much in 20 th century music. When in a programme like that, no mention is made of Sibelius, Nielsen or Janáek, nor of the waves of new music from the USA, as well as England, and when I see a narrowing range of music performed from this wonderfully rich and diverse period, I regret that the new generations of music-lovers will miss so much.

In the case of Delius, still seemingly out of favour with all but a very few of the pundits, the matter is even more acute. It is good that the Delius Society is actively encouraging students to perform his music.

Would it also be worth planning – perhaps with the 150th anniversary, and the Society's golden jubilee in mind – a critical and analytical appraisal of Delius's music, something of the kind that Deryck Cooke had been planning, and which was sadly cut off by his early death? Would the Society and/or the Trust be able to commission such a study? I am not well enough placed to judge whether such an enterprise, if well enough carried out, could reverse the present tide of taste, but it might be worth considering.

MISCELLANY

A Statue for Felix?

'No statue has ever been erected for a critic,'sniffed Sibelius when asked his opinion of this much-maligned species. Not strictly true, of course, as George Bernard Shaw – friend of Elgar and long-time music critic – is immortalised in bronze at Dublin's National Gallery. But if any critic deserves a statue it is surely Felix Aprahamian, who died earlier this year, aged 85. With his pointed goatee beard and black opera cloak, Felix cut a decidedly more glamorous figure than many of the musicians be reviewed. A lifelong devotee of Delius, he espoused the cause of similarly unfashionable composers with relish and, more importantly, was a constant champion of young musicians at the beginning of their careers. A statue of Felix would be a welcome adornment to the leafy lanes of his native Muswell Hill.

Julian Lloyd Webber
(Courtesy of The Daily Telegraph)

Edna Graham

I noticed, in the obituary of the celebrated singer Edna Graham published in the *Independent* on 4 June 2005, reference to the fact that she was chosen by Sir Thomas Beecham to sing the title role in the first performance of *Irmelin.*

The writer, Elizabeth Forbes, observed 'The performance took place at the New Theatre, Oxford, on 4 May 1953, some 19 years after the death of the composer. Despite the advocacy of Beecham, who, according to one critic 'urged his singers and players (the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra) with great towpath yells of encouragement', *Irmelin* was not a popular success, though it was undoubtedly an important musical occasion.'

Richard Packer

The Pianola Rolls

During the course of Lyndon Jenkins' and Paul Guinery's talk to the London Branch on, someone asked whether the "funny things" on the piano in the picture on page 64 of their *Delius & Fenby* were pianola rolls and if so, why were they there? Nobody then seemed to know the answer, but perhaps it is in a letter from Jelka to Percy Grainger of 27 December 1927:

'We have just spent a few delightful days with Balfour and Fred. Austin and Fred was really wonderfully bright and talkative. He insisted on having a lion's share of champagne and also drank black coffee! But it all seemed to agree with him. We had all the Brooks's in for the Xmas tree and Fred Austin loved the old germanic rites of 'jul'.

Austin and Balfour had great struggles with the Duo-Art. B. has played his [piano arrangement of] 'Cuckoo in Spring' and had the proofs with him, but perhaps as a result of the deadly cold spell we just had – the thing would only play Balfour's roll when you turned it on FF (Dance). He was indignant. They also played the Song before Sunrise and the 2nd Dance Rhapsody a quatre mains – The latter seems such a lovely piece…..

I wrote the letter you so splendidly sketched out for me to the Duo-Art people in U.S.A.; at first I waited for the Dance Rhapsody, but as it was not forthcoming I thought it wiser to send the letter first. Mona Dubois came too and showed me how to change the Duo-Art's speed myself. So that difficulty is overcome. We are greatly looking forward to these rolls. Fred Austin played the proof rolls several times; he did not know the N.C. [North Country] Sketches. Is it not a delightful thing to be able to hear them like that!!'

There is also a reference to the rolls in Stephen Lloyd's book (*op.cit., supra* p. 174

ML-B

Erratum – with apologies

Contrary to what it said on page 40 of the last issue of the Journal (137), *Little Birdie* and *The Streamlet's Slumber Song* are published in Volume 17 of the *Collected Edition*.

Delius Wine

Last year a friend brought back from Italy the bottle of wine pictured. Naturally, I was intrigued by the name Delius on the label. Apparently the wine comes from the Neapolitan region of Italy. Researches seem to indicate that it is called Delius after the Greek God. It is another name for Apollo the Sun God but linked to wine drinking, merry-making, the flute playing Pan and is an ancient god of agriculture and pagan rites in the countryside. The vineyard seems to specialise in Greek grape varieties that were brought over to Italy at the time of the Aeneid following the Trojan wars! John Milton's Elegy refers to Delius as a Greek God too.

The home page of the winemaker is http//www.cantinadeltaburno.it/2.html (in English), and the wine itself http://www.cantinadeltaburno.it/delius.html (Italian only).

Ian Lace

Music for Tired Gardeners

Our Secretary, Ann Dixon, reports that throughout the Summer – and perhaps still – National Trust Shops are selling (among other compilations) a 2-CD collection called *Music for Tired Gardeners*. Most Members have probably never considered themselves to fall into that category, but if anyone were to listen to it, they would find, says Ann, eight Delius tracks on three CDs. Your Editor was unable to blandish the ticket office staff at Uppark in West Sussex (the Classical house with a fabulous exterior, but a dull inside, that has recently been completely restored after a spectacular

fire) to allow him free entry for the sole purpose of going to the shop – but he felt that the interests of Members should come before his own pocket, and so he paid up to go into both the House and the gardens. He could, though, only find a pair of CDs, on which were - not in the least surprisingly - *In a Summer Garden*, *The Cuckoo* and an extract from *Late Swallows*, played by either the English Symphony Orchestra or the BBC Concert Orchestra (the conductors were not named on the case). One may scoff, but every Delius piece, however 'popular', that is broadcast or appears on an 'easy-listening' CD is almost certainly bound to make at least one person want to listen to some more, and they might even get smitten……

ML-B

'Song of Summer' CD

The Barbirolli Society's Delius CD 'Song of Summer' is now back in print, and they are pleased to offer it to DSJ members. The recordings were made between 1929 (*A Song before Sunrise*) and 1956 (*The Walk to the Paradise Garden, Irmelin Prelude, On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring, Intermezzo* from *Fennimore and Gerda* and *Idyll*) with *Song of Summer* (1950) and *Two Aquarelles* (1948). Barbirolli conducts the New Symphony Orchestra and the Hallé Orchestra, with Sylvia Fisher and Jess Walters as soloists in the *Idyll*.

The price of the CD is £9.50 (including UK postage & packing). Please make cheques payable to 'The Barbirolli Society'. (For orders from outside the UK, please contact the Society for postage costs.) Please send order to: Vice Chairman, The Barbirolli Society, 11 Cranbrook Drive, Kennington, Oxford OX1 5RR.

EVENTS 2005 - 2006

Tuesday 20 September 2005
LONDON BRANCH MEETING (These are all held at The New Cavendish Club, 44 Great Cumberland Place, London W1 (close to Marble Arch Underground) at 7.15 pm
Frederick Delius – Some Friends & Associations - a talk by Tony Lindsey

Friday 29 September 2005
Blackheath Concert halls
Trinity College of Music Ensembles
Programme included Delius's *Late Swallows*

Sunday 2 October 2005 at 3 pm
St Albans Abbey
Memorial Service for Meredith Davies

Saturday 8 October 2005
Fairfield Halls, Croydon
RPO conducted by Barry Wordsworth
'Light' English programme, including some Delius

Saturday 8 October 2005
Tetbury Parish Church, Gloucestershire
Tasmin Little (violin) & John Lenahan (piano)
Programme: Sonatas by Mozart & Brahms, Delius *Legende* & Bridge Sonata.

Tuesday 18 October 2005
LONDON BRANCH MEETING
New Cavendish Club
Constant Lambert, Delius & Jazz - a talk by Stephen Lloyd

Wednesday 19, Thursday 20 & Friday 21 October 2005
The Philharmonie, Berlin
Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, cond Sir Charles Mackerass
Programme includes *The Walk to the Paradise Garden*

Sunday 23 October 2005 at 6.30
PHILADELPHIA BRANCH
Philadelphia Ethical Society, Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia
The life, loves and music of Frederick Delius. A presentation by Emanuel E Garcia, with a painting exhibition and a performance of Delius's 3rd Violin Sonata
Details from emanuuelegarcia@verizon.net

Wednesday 16 November 2005 from 2 pm until 5 pm
The Royal College of Music
Delius Song Masterclass given by Jane Manning

Friday 25 November 2005 at 7 pm
The Royal Academy of Music, Marylebone Road, London
(David Josefowitz Hall)
The Delius Society Prize

Thursday 8 December 2005 at 7.15
LONDON BRANCH MEETING
New Cavendish Club
Delius's Requiem – Masterpiece or ? - a talk by Tony Summers

MIDLANDS BRANCH MEETINGS
For details, please ring Richard Kitching on 01335-360798

2006

Saturday 28 January 2006 at 2.00 pm
PHILADELPHIA BRANCH
St Paul's Lutheran Church, 120 North Easton Road (at Mount Carmel Avenue, opposite Glenside train station), Glenside PA 19038. Annual Delius Birthday Event: *Ivor Gurney & Marion Scott –Song of Pain & Beauty* – a talk by Pamela Blevins.

Saturday 4 February 2006 at 7.30
St Marks Church, Broomhill, Sheffield
Sheffield Symphony Orchestra with local choir,
cond.John Longstaff
Programme includes *Appalachia*

Thursday 23 February 2006 at 7.15 pm
LONDON BRANCH MEETING
New Cavendish Club
Speaker and subject to be announced

Tuesday 21 March 2006 at 7.15 pm
LONDON BRANCH MEETING
New Cavendish Club
Delius and the Dance - a talk by Michael Green

Monday 27 March 2006 at 8.00 (note change of time)
Academy of Vocal Arts, 1920 Spruce Street, Philadelphia
1807 & Friends Chamber Ensemble: Delius:*Legende*,
Finzi: *Interlude for Oboe & Strings*, Elgar: *Piano Quintet*

Tuesday 4 – Saturday 8 April 2006
Bloomsbury Theatre, Gordon Street, London WC1
Koanga (6 performances)
Pegasus Opera Company, conductor Paul McGrath,
director Tim Coleman

Wednesday 26 April 2006 at 7.30
St John's, Smith Square, London SW1
London Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Christopher Warren-Green
Programme: Delius *On hearing the First Cuckoo* and *Summer Night on the River,* Haydn *C major Cello Concerto &* Beethoven *Pastoral Symphony*

Thursday 27 April 2006 at 7.15 pm
LONDON BRANCH MEETING
New Cavendish Club
Speaker and subject to be announced

Friday 28 April 2006 at 8.00
PHILADELPHIA BRANCH
Carmel Presbyterian Church, 100 Edge Hill Road, Glenside PA 19038
Piano recital by Clipper Erickson (note change of artist)
Works by Delius, Quiilter, Cyril Scott, Griffes, Dett & Gershwin

Friday 28 April 2006 at 7.30
Symphony Hall, Birmingham
London Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Christopher Warren-Green
Programme as 26 April

Sunday 21 May 2006 at 7.30
Castle Manor School, Eastern Avenue, Haverhill, Suffolk
(Part of 20th Foundation Anniversary celebrations)
Haverhill Sinfonia, cond.Kevin Hill
Programme includes *American Rhapsody*

Sunday 11 June 2006 probably at 5.00
PHILADELPHIA BRANCH
Gala 30th Anniversary Concert:
Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, PA 19348
Michael Stairs (Piano), David Booth (violin & piano): including 4-hand works

Saturday 8 July 2006 (provisional – but during the Bradford Festival)
Bradford, Yorkshire
THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & an all-Delius concert in the evening

Produced for The Delius Society by Design & Print – Oxford