

DELIUS SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER

of the

DELIUS SOCIETY

(President: Eric Fenby, O.B.E.)

Hon. Secretary: Miss Estelle Palmley

Hon. Treasurer: Miss Ann Todd

Editor: John White

No. 23

MAY, 1969.

Contents

Editorial.

The Delius Trust Manuscripts .. Rachel Lowe.

EDITORIAL

It will be recalled that in a previous Editorial I asked for comments on the suggestion that the Society should produce a recording of songs and piano music by Delius. Our Vice-Chairman, Mr. R.B. Meadows, compiled a report based on replies received, the greater part of which is given below. Some abbreviation has been necessary through lack of space.

Most of the Newsletter is devoted to a reprint of an article by Mrs. Dugmore (Rachel Lowe) which originally appeared in 'Brio'. I am most grateful to her, and to the Secretary of the International Association of Music Libraries, United Kingdom Branch, for permission to give the full text, which forms an extremely interesting companion piece to Mr. Threlfall's article included in the last Newsletter. Your attention is drawn to the full acknowledgments printed on page 6.

Various replies came from members in response to Newsletter No. 20 about the possibility of recording the items played at the Society meeting on 22nd March 1968.

Our members' views on this were full of enthusiasm. Even so, the Committee is bound to take note that only a very few potential customers have shown support for this undertaking. To some extent we have also been overtaken by events. Cynara, the rarest piece in the programmes, has now been recorded commercially.

Members' wants ranged far beyond the scope of items played on 22nd March. Indeed, there are gaps throughout the Delius discography. Mr. Loader seemed to me right in emphasising the ideal of Complete Recorded Works of Delius for voice or instruments less than full orchestra and chorus.

The March recital no longer seems to contribute enough to this end and we will therefore not be pursuing the recording idea.

Arrival of the Cello Sonata and the String Quartet will fill some of the worst gaps to which attention has been drawn. The songs, surely, await choice of interpreter.

Mr. Henry Giles,
London.

"Personally I am more interested in the piano stuff but the songs would be a most acceptable extra. I would be prepared to buy a disc (not tape) and to pay up to £2. 12. 6. for such a record. A recording of Delius Chamber work(s) e.g. Sonata for cello, would be preferred to the songs."

Mr. Richard T. Foose,
Washington,
U.S.A.

"I would be willing to pay any reasonable price for the record, and I think it reasonable to assume that the cost would exceed that of a commercial recording ... I would favour a DISC but would accept tape. I would like to repeat a suggestion I made earlier, that Mr. Fenby record a talk, at the piano, about the years at Grez. I would also favour the violin and cello sonatas and at least the slow movement of the string quartet."

Mr. Richard Warren, Jr.
Hamden, Conn.
U.S.A.

"I would be most interested in having recordings of songs because of the relative lack of attention to songs by recording companies. I suggest DISC rather than a tape (that is, a pressed disc, not an acetate) for the sake of convenience and greater appeal (I suspect more people have record players than tape machines). I'd be willing to pay \$5.00 for a disc."

Mr. Lyall N. Laurent,
Auckland,
New Zealand.

"At this distance it would indeed be a great pleasure to be able to procure a recording such as that proposed. The suggested works would be most attractive. I have facility for playing disc or tape, but would perhaps prefer the latter, either half or quarter track. I suggest if tape is used, that the speed be $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s., for greater dynamic range, appreciating that $3\frac{3}{4}$ i.p.s. is entirely successful for high quality music reproduction. It is understood that the cost of a limited edition issue such as this would be higher than that of commercially available discs

or pre-recorded tapes, surely little to be reckoned with for such a privilege and in such a cause."

Mr. Kenneth Kidd,
Liverpool.

"Mr. White sounds us as to whether we should be interested in the idea of a recording. I should prefer it in TAPE form and I would be willing to cover my share of the cost. I wonder whether it would not be possible to hear Mr. Eric Fenby reminiscing about "Delius as I knew him".

Mr. Peter W. Moss,
Reading,
Berks.

"For myself I would prefer an acetate dubbing on disc from the tape that would be used to make the recording. Price will be high, of course, but probably not much higher than 60/- per disc; in fact it should be comparable to the highest commercial price - 42/-. I would, however, be prepared to buy a tape if that is how the majority would want their copy."

Miss Pat Kirke,
Kew Gardens,
Surrey.

"I would like to have the songs but not particularly the piano pieces."

Mrs. Alice Jones,
Halesowen,
Birmingham.

"We would very much like to have a recording of the Delius music listed in the newsletter. May we also suggest the "Lute Lark" which we have been much longing for - and the first violin sonata.... All songs are welcome any part songs also. As regarding price we don't mind a tape or disc we would fit in to the majority vote. We think that £5 or £6 would not be unreasonable for instance."

Mr. Richard Loader,
Chipperfield,
Herts.

"Recording of chamber concert. Yes, I should definitely support this and would be prepared to pay any reasonable cost; personally I should (at least at present) prefer disc to tape, but since discs are most usually made from tape masters, it should not be beyond the wit of man, having made the master tape to produce an edition on disc, and to individual demand, duplicates from the tape. On the subject of other items worthy to be recorded; if these or other artists can be found who are willing; I feel the Society should aim for the ideal of a Complete Recorded Works of Delius for voice or instruments less than full orchestra and chorus. Obviously such a programme would need time, enthusiasm and money; but already I have the impression that the first two of these commodities at any rate are not lacking."

(new member)

THE DELIUS TRUST MANUSCRIPTS

by RACHEL LOWE

Frederick Delius died in 1934. His widow, Jelka Rosen Delius, who only outlived him by a little less than a year, founded the Delius Trust with Sir Thomas Beecham as principal musical adviser. The Trust's aims were threefold; the production of a definitive edition of Delius's music under the editorship of Sir Thomas Beecham; the recording of Delius's works under the baton of Sir Thomas Beecham; and the promotion of festivals and special performances to foster interest in the music of Delius.

At the request of Mrs. Delius, Sir Thomas Beecham also undertook to write a biography of the composer, and, during the ensuing twenty-five years, was granted sole right of access to the manuscripts and other documents bequeathed to the Delius Trust. In consequence, the exhibition of manuscripts at the Delius Festival of 1962, shortly after Sir Thomas Beecham's death, aroused great public interest. The Trustees, therefore, decided that the material should be kept together to form the nucleus of archives which might command for Delius the same respect from historians and scholars of the future as Sir Thomas Beecham's understanding and enthusiasm had achieved with the audiences of the past.

The documents were housed at that time both in the office of the legal Adviser in Great Russell Street and in the vaults of the Trustee Branch of Barclays Bank in King William Street. A single repository was necessary for sorting and cataloguing but in London's congested state this was not achieved until March 1963, when Sir Thomas Armstrong, the chairman of the three advisers appointed in succession to Sir Thomas Beecham, generously gave up a large part of his personal storeroom at the Royal Academy of Music. The work was again delayed by the illness and consequent resignation of the archivist to the Delius Trust, Mr. Alan Denson, who had been appointed in 1962. After a six month interim, during which I completed certain researches on Delius begun with Mr. Denson's encouragement, I was appointed archivist in his stead in January 1964.

In March 1963 the entire holding occupied one large old-fashioned wardrobe trunk and a modest deed box. Entered as 'Accession One' in the record book, it included approximately 1,613 folios of manuscript music, mainly in Delius's hand, but also in the holographs of copyists and arrangers with names famous in their own right. There were also approximately 1,300 holograph letters and signed typescripts addressed to Delius, whose writers comprised a fair cross section of the famous and the great between the years 1888 and 1934. For the rest, there were a few holograph drafts of letters sent out by Delius, a small quantity of typed copies and photostats of letters received by other people from Delius; a quantity of typed transcripts and translations relating to the holograph letters; an incomplete collection of the printed scores with certain items marked by Sir Thomas Beecham preparatory to re-editing, some miscellaneous 'Deliana' such as photographs and programmes, and several bundles of related papers.

By January 1966 some fifteen further accessions had been added, of which the most momentous were the return of five Delius holograph scores from the publishers Galliard (Augener) and the generous gift from Mr. Eric Fenby of some music manuscripts, 'Deliana' and 248 letters. Also between 1963 and 1966 over a hundred typescripts and photocopies of letters written by Delius were received from private collections and public archives in Norway and England. Of these, thirty-four to Edvard Munch the painter, nine to Mrs. Randi Blehr, wife of the Norwegian Prime Minister, Otto Blehr, two to the patriot-poet Bjornson and thirteen to the composer, Charles Orr, added new dimensions to the Delius image. The only major disappointments were the failure to trace a legal heir to the violinist Halvdan Jehe, who might have retained the Delius side of a prolific correspondence, and the discovery that the composers Christian Sinding and Balfour Gardiner, whose extant letters to Delius are numerous, had destroyed all their incoming correspondence.

Before their removal to the Royal Academy of Music the letters, transcripts and related documents had been kept in coloured envelope files inside unnecessarily large document boxes of heavy board. To facilitate the removal, the files had been taken out of the boxes and placed in the lid of the wardrobe trunk which had housed the bulk of the music. Their speedy withdrawal from these crushed conditions was essential, and, space being at a premium, a fireproof filing cabinet was purchased to provide both temporary storage and a sorting aid alongside the old bureau which had to serve for table and desk.

Apart from two rudimentary office lists of the music, there was no inventory, and the only indication of the arrangement of the letters in the Delius home was the existence of certain bundles in approximate date order, one author to a bundle. An early, but untitled and undated list made by De. Berta Geissmar with the purpose of noting the names of Delius's correspondents in alphabetical order, also indicated that the letters had been received in this fashion.

Transcriptions and translations of many of the letters, of which the originals were in German, had been placed in files of mixed authorship chronologically arranged. Unfortunately, the work of transcription had not been carried out systematically and there were stray holographs in the files of translations. As to the language distribution of the originals, I estimated that a little over half were in German, even when Scandinavian in origin, about three-eighths in English and the remainder in French with an occasional effusion in Norwegian.

I reserved one drawer of the cabinet for the task of collecting copies of letters written by Delius and any original Delius letters which might be given to the Trust in the near future. I separated holographs from typescripts and placed them in folders in alphabetical order. The work of making an inventory could then begin. The inventory was made on slips eight inches by five inches which allowed for making a carbon copy as I worked. This was an essential tool as I had no clerical assistance and there was, and still is, much reference work to be done in other libraries and repositories. This simple, first stage inventory is alphabetical with the entries made under the sender. If the writer was known to have received letters from Delius, which are still extant, a footnote was made

to the effect that he was also the 'Recipient of X letters from Frederick Delius'. These were then listed in full under 'Frederick Delius to X' together with their archive reference and a note of whether copies had been received by the Delius Trust. Up to ten letters could be entered on a page with the necessary bibliographical details for identification purposes. Biographical comment together with cross references to other letters or to the music holding, could be made on the back of the page. Where a correspondent had written more than ten letters, a simple entry was made of the total number and a note referred the reader to the 'detailed catalogue'.

The detailed catalogue is kept in a legal-sized ring book and is not intended to be alphabetical. At the present time it comprises all the correspondence with and from Scandinavian sources, and some of the longer correspondences from other sources. The rest of the longer lists together with more detailed entries of everything in the inventory will be entered in due course. Except where letters are routine acknowledgments a two or three line note of the contents of each letter is made. In the case of a very big correspondence like that with Grieg, Sinding and Munch, a breakdown of the subject matter has been made at the end of the list together with a page or more of cross references.

Although this catalogue is not intended to be alphabetical, the lists are made, as in the inventory, under the name of the sender. They are arranged chronologically as far as possible and so numbered. Where both sides of the correspondence are extant and copies or originals of the Delius letters have been received, a system of double numbering is employed. Two sample entries from the Grieg/Delius correspondence will illustrate the point. The Delius letters in this case are housed in Bergen Offentlige Bibliotek from which photocopies were received.

The first entry in the list of Grieg's letters to Delius reads as follows:

1. (1) Leipzig. 28th February, 1888.
ALS. One leaf folded, of which 2 sides are blank: 22 x 14 cms.

The first entry on the list of Delius's letters to Grieg reads as follows:

1. (2) Harkort Strasse 5. (Leipzig) Saturday. (Early 1888.)
ALS. One page written. One photostat.

The first number indicates the position of the item in its own list. The number in brackets indicates the position of that item in the correspondence if the two sides are regarded together.

When the detailed catalogue is finished the reader will find the correspondence grouped according to the country of the persons writing to Delius. This has the double advantage of reflecting the source of the items and also retains them in approximately the order in which they were received: the Scandinavian and Franco-Scandinavian friends being the most active correspondents between 1888 and 1908, the German conductors, musicians and family friends more particularly active between 1900 and 1910 and the English friends, with a few 'flashes in the pan' around 1899, being represented steadily from 1907 until 1934. The only Scandinavian correspondence to continue until the end was that with Edvard Munch, an exact contemporary, and, as Delius only kept thirteen of Munch's early letters, this was only confirmed in 1964 when the Director of the Munch Museum in Oslo kindly sent copies of thirty-four letters from Delius to Munch and five drafts which Munch made for letters to Delius.

Rather than ignore the transcripts and translations which had been made for Sir Thomas Beecham's use by Dr. Geissmar and others, it was decided to supply more on the same literal pattern until every letter in a foreign language was represented in this way. During 1964 and 1965 several translators were employed for specific tasks, but in 1966 Dr. Lionel Carley was appointed by the Delius Trust to check existing work and to supply missing translations. He is also checking all entries in the inventory which apply to letters in foreign languages, and is making a card index under sender and recipient for the use of searchers. When this task is finished it is hoped that a chronological index for every letter will be made and also a subject index.

Whether the holograph letters should be bound into volumes or placed in container board boxes will depend on available accommodation and the type and amount of usage envisaged by the Delius Trust for them. Many of the music manuscripts had already been bound by the composer in a somewhat crude fashion. After due consideration the trustees decided that all the music manuscripts should be bound and that portfolios should be provided for the printed music. Old bindings, found to be injurious to their contents, were removed, but kept for display purposes. A fire-proof vault has been provided for the storage of the music.

By the spring of 1965 the music manuscripts had been foliated, inventoried and microfilmed, but the comments and queries of two students who visited the archives at that time, showed me the necessity for a more detailed catalogue to include comparisons of versions, references to published scores and cross references both to the Delius documents and to findings in other repositories.

This detailed catalogue, or calendar, of the music manuscripts and 'Deliana' was completed in May 1966 with some valuable assistance from Mr. Robert Threlfall of the Delius Society of Great Britain. It is hoped that, when Mr. Eric Fenby has completed some footnotes, publication, with suitable illustrations, will shortly take place.

A full description of method of work has been given in the preface to the catalogue but a few points might be of interest here. The manuscripts and 'Deliana' which comprise Delius Trust Volumes 1-44 described in the catalogue, come from five accessions, all of which can be said to be from the same source, the Delius home in Grez. They contain all the most important unpublished manuscripts, although several are known to be in private hands and it is possible there may be more 'strays' with titles not yet recorded in print. As well as a number of fair copies of published works, there are several manuscripts of earlier versions including *Over the Hills and Far Away*, the *Piano Concerto*, *Life's Dance* and *In a Summer Garden*. There are also interesting 'working copies', in short score, arranged for Delius by friends and copyists, including *A Poem of Life and Love*: a transmutation of this into *A Song of Summer* from full score via arrangement and dictation, can be seen in Delius Trust Volumes 31, 32 and 33.

To make the work of detailed description easier and to allow for the return of manuscripts belonging to the same source at future dates, each volume was foliated separately. The items were placed in chronological order, but manuscripts of a similar type were bound together where possible, and different versions of a work were placed concurrently. Songs, small instrumental pieces, and sketches were placed after the bigger works: Vols. 35-40. Every attempt was made to identify the sketches even if they were only cognate with known material. An early sketch book occupies Vol. 38, and sketches for Paris are Vol. 40. Volume 39 consists of 115 folios of assorted sketches from the vigorous 1880's to the last faltering handwriting of the sketches for Hassan, and occupies pp. 105-123 of the unpublished catalogue. Items of 'Deliana' such as the family genealogy and important photocopies made during Sir Thomas Beecham's time, which have bearing on the contents of Delius's work room at Grez occupy Volumes 41-44, while Volume 45 contains Trust Supplementary Manuscript (1). The term 'Supplementary Manuscript' is being used for manuscripts of particular interest, but not definitely associated with the same source as Accession 1. By the same token, a copy of the lithograph of *Margot la Rouge* given by Delius to Eric Fenby when the latter was working for him at Grez-sur-Loing, is catalogued as Volume 21 next to Delius's own vocal score of the work written in the hand of Maurice Ravel.

The clerical minutiae of a task like this often obscure the ultimate goal, but with the manuscripts and documents of the Delius Trust, pleasant discoveries were almost a daily occurrence. They varied from small points such as the amendment of Beecham's datings for the Bartok correspondence, the discovery of Paulo Audacior as Delius's nom-de-plume for the Milan competition of 1904, the possibility that 'The wind sighs in the trees', (*North Country Sketches*) may have been a compositor's misreading of 'sounds', to such major items as the solution of the discrepancies between Heseltine's account of the career of the opera *The Magic Fountain* and that of Beecham, and the discovery that the first public performance ever of a Delius work was in Oslo in 1891*, pre-dating the usual biographical accounts which give Monte Carlo, 1893. Then, on broader issues, much more light has been thrown on the operas. This, in turn, has raised some more problems such as that posed by the undated *Le Jardin du Paradis*, a French version of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. Then again, in a totally different field, I think a good case may be made out, from a close scrutiny of the manuscripts and documents, for Delius as an originator rather than a copier of certain idioms of the English Folk Song School; (in a similar type of study, I have found great pleasure and relaxation from cataloguing in observing the reappearance and transformation of themes in works containing similar emotive forces.)

While it is possible that the time is not yet ripe for another full scale study of Delius, there is certainly room for more bibliographical work which would take stock of other sources of information in such countries as Germany, France, the United States, Australia and elsewhere. An extensive essay in amendments to previous biographies and studies of the composer's music could be undertaken, and,

while the Delius Archives are small, they are sufficiently representative to allow some worth-while monographs to be written. At the same time, the holograph letters from other people form a valuable source of social as well as musical history. Two articles by Mr. John Boulton Smith have made use of the Munch correspondence. He has also lectured on the friendship of Delius and Munch both in England and Norway, and in May, 1965 I gave a lecture on Delius and Norway to the Anglo-Norse Society of Great Britain.

It would be presumptuous to pretend that more than a beginning has been made in establishing the Delius Archives, and I little thought, in 1960, when I walked into a bookshop in Jacksonville, Florida, pointed to Sir Thomas Beecham's book in the window and asked the way to Solano Grove, that the way would lead to this work. I should like to thank many archivists and librarians for their ungrudging advice, among whom I must especially mention Miss Joan Mary Gibbs of the Palaeography Room in the Goldsmiths Library at the University of London, Miss Pamela Willetts of the British Museum and Mr. Walter H. Stock of the Royal Academy of Music. I feel very grateful and privileged to have been able to make this beginning for the Delius Trustees.

* c.f. Musical Times, March 1965, pp. 190-192: 'Delius's First Performance' by Rachel Lowe.

Copyright Rachel Lowe (Mrs. R. Dugmore) 1968.

First printed in 'Brio' (Journal of the United Kingdom Branch of the International Association of Music Libraries), Vol. 5, No. 1. (Spring 1968), and reproduced by permission.
