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This edition of

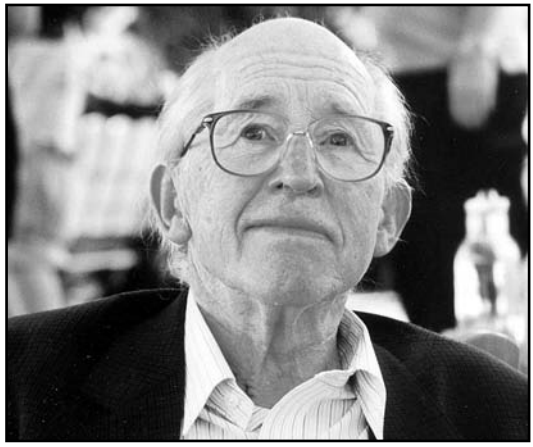
The Delius Society Journal

is dedicated to the memory of

ROLAND GIBSON

founder of

The Delius Society



Roland Gibson MSc PhD
28 February 1917 – 1 March 2001

Roland Gibson, Founder of The Delius Society, lived to see it active and flourishing. We now mourn his death. Before becoming the hundredth member, and long before becoming President, I knew Roland as a lovable man, happy in having achieved his Delian purpose.

We will miss him.

Felix Aprahamian

CONTENTS

Chairman's Message……..……..... 6
Editorial……..…….. 7

ARTICLES
Watford sur Gade: Delius in Watford During the First World War, by Lewis Foreman..... 8
An Early Manuscript Reappears, by Robert Threlfall..... 19
Summer Holiday 1890: Delius in Jersey, by Jane Armour-Chélu..... 22

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SOCIAL GATHERING 2001
Hatherley Manor, Gloucester 18-20 August 2001..... 29

DELIUS SOCIETY MEETINGS
London, 15 March 2001..... 36
West of England, 17 March and 8 April 2001..... 37
Midlands, 21 April 2001..... 39
Midlands, 23 June 2001..... 41

CONCERT REVIEWS
A Late Lark etc: Huntingdon, 30 June 2001..... 43
Song Recital: Helen Withers (mezzo-soprano) and Roger Buckley (piano), Three Choirs Festival, Gloucester, 19 August 2001..... 44
A Mass of Life: Three Choirs Festival, Gloucester, 19 August 2001..... 46

RECORDING REVIEWS
Great Recordings of the Century: Beecham: EMI..... 50
The Beecham Collection: Somm 10..... 51
Sir Thomas Beecham Conducts Delius: Sony..... 55
Julian Lloyd Webber – Celebration..... 57

BOOK REVIEWS
Cyril Scott: A Bio-Bibliography by Laurie J Sampsed..... 58
A Fiddler Tells All by Ralph Nicholson..... 60
Julian Lloyd Webber: Married to Music by Margaret Campbell..... 61
Tunes of Glory: The Life of Sir Malcolm Sargent by Richard Aldous..... 62

VIDEO/DVD RELEASE
A Song of Summer – Special Offer for Members..... 65

NEWS FROM AMERICA..... 67

OBITUARIES..... 69
Roland Gibson, Norah Barnaby, Peter Trotman

THE NEED TO BUILD A DELIUS SOCIETY ARCHIVE..... 76

MEMORIES FROM THE ARCHIVE..... 77

MISCELLANY..... 78

THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DELIUS SOCIETY..... 86
Annual General Meeting 2002

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR..... 87
Robert Matthew-Walker, Paul Chennell, George Little, Tony Noakes, Nicholas Berril

DELIUS RADIO LISTINGS, March to August 2001..... 92

FORTHCOMING EVENTS..... 95

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

This year's AGM Weekend, held in Gloucester to coincide with the Three Choirs Festival, attracted a hundred members of the Society and was reckoned an outstanding success. As in 1998 the efficient, sensitive organisation was by Honorary Secretary Anthony Lindsey, to whom we owe a continuing debt of thanks.

Leaving aside the official business of the AGM, there was much to interest and involve members, including an excellent lecture by member Anthony Boden, historian of the Festival and for many years its Gloucester organiser. There were many opportunities for socialising, aided by the country house hotel environment. The culmination of the weekend was a performance in the Cathedral of *A Mass of Life*, reviewed in this issue of the *Journal*, and, for those who were able to stay on, the fine feast of British music continued for the next six days.

The pleasure of the week was however tempered by sadness. There was one whose ambition to attend the Cathedral performance of *A Mass of Life* proved unattainable, despite unbounded courage and resolve. I refer of course to our dear friend Derek Cox, who died just a few days after the performance.

An obituary will follow in the next issue. Meanwhile, we can remember this extraordinary man of diverse talents and multiple achievements, and his great contribution to our Society. A member of the Committee for 23 years, he served for the last 13 as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. He also spoke at meetings of the Society on subjects that particularly interested him. Many of us will recall with affection his last ever presentation, concerning Paris and the fin de siècle, which he delivered in London last October. The old fire burned bright as Derek declaimed poems and quotations, many of them in French, leaving us in no doubt as to his enthusiasm and commitment.

At the close of his funeral oration, our Vice President Lyndon Jenkins quoted from *Songs of Travel* by Robert Louis Stevenson: lines which were sung, in Vaughan Williams's setting, at the great Festival which Derek would so much like to have attended, and which bear repetition here.

> 'I have trod the upward and the downward slope;
> I have endured and done in days before;
> I have longed for all, and bid farewell to hope;
> And I have lived and loved, and closed the door.'

EDITORIAL

Hopefully this edition contains something of interest for all members. Coincidentally two of the articles are based on similar themes - places where Delius stayed. In the case of the article by Lewis Foreman, it was Watford during his exile from France during the First World War; and in the article that I have researched, it was his holiday spent on the island of Jersey, in the Channel Islands in 1890. As a historian, rather than a musician, I find it especially relevant to discover the details that show us another dimension of the man and his life, and add 'flesh' to the letters so excellently presented by Lionel Carley in his books. The third article is of immense interest; Robert Threlfall details the discovery of a manuscript. It is amazing that such finds are still happening, and fortunate that we have someone of the calibre and scholarship of Robert, to be able to reveal the details to us. We owe him an immense debt.

Members, will I am sure, be delighted to know that at long last the excellent film by Ken Russell, *A Song of Summer*, is now available on video and DVD. Details of how to obtain this at a special reduced price are included. Stewart Winstanley can now provide a definite answer to the eternal enquiry 'Where can I get a copy'! It seems that for so many this film was 'the gateway' to Delius's music.

Sadly since the last Journal several notable members are no longer with us. Midland Branch stalwart member Peter Trotman's obituary is contained within these pages. Norah Barnaby, perhaps better know as 'Norman Cameron' died in April aged 101 and Alan Jefferson writes for us an appreciation of her life. I hope in future issues to be able to reveal more about this remarkable woman and her crusade to promote the music of Delius in the early years of the last century. And, very recently Derek Cox, who was for so long our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, and a good friend to so many of us, sadly died. Lyndon Jenkins will be writing about Derek's life and commitment to the Society in the next edition.

I would, as always, like to sincerely thank all those who have contributed to this edition; I can only present information that I receive – the Journal is what you all make it. Please continue to send in items for consideration. I hope to see many of you at next year's 40th Anniversary celebrations in London.

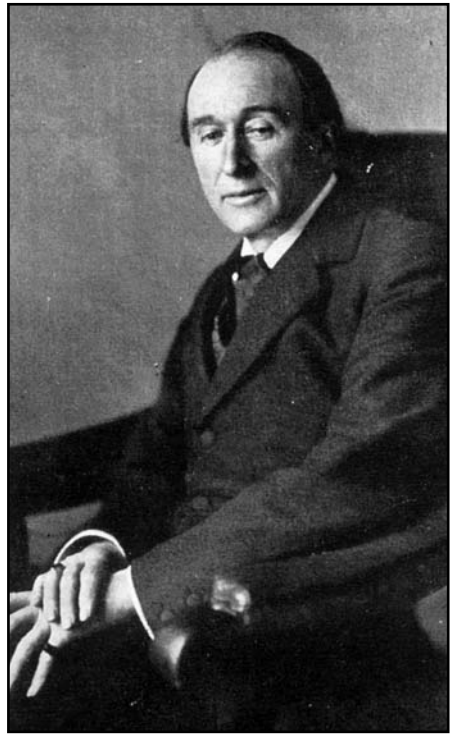
Jane Armour-Chélu

WATFORD SUR GADE
DELIUS IN WATFORD DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Lewis Foreman

After the London concert of his music at St James's Hall, Piccadilly, on 30 May 1899, which had very wide press coverage, it was several years before Delius began to become well-known in England, largely as a result of the championship of Henry Wood and Thomas Beecham. When the Piano Concerto was played by Théodor Szánto at the 'Proms' on 22 October 1907, effectively signalling the start of Delius's success in England, the programme note was replete with references to recent German performances of his music, not only emphasising where Delius's first public performances took place but also clearly underlining what was a matter of prestige - if he was widely performed in Germany he must be good. Delius's fame came from performances largely in England in the seven years before the First World War, by which he was widely accepted here and regarded as a leading British composer.

Long resident in Paris as a young man, he had become a very cosmopolitan figure, a cosmopolitanism reinforced by his marriage to the painter Jelka Rosen and his life at Grez-sur-Loing. His French garden and the river Loing introduces those images of nature into his music which in the case of Elgar and Vaughan Williams we associate with the country of the Severn. In works such as *In a Summer Garden* and *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, Delius produced pieces in which the ambience of the country evoked - if it really mattered - was more acceptable to a British than a French audience. Although it seems most unlikely, one is inclined to wonder if, when he had to find Delius accommodation in rather a hurry in the Autumn of 1914, Beecham hoped that by obtaining a congenial spot he could be instrumental in replicating the experience of Grez for the Deliuses, and chose the unlikely location of Watford at the beginning of the War.



Delius in 1914

At the outbreak of the First World War, Delius and his wife were long-established in their house at Grez-sur-Loing, and with frightening speed soon after the onset of the war which initially went badly, they found themselves refugees, vividly described in a celebrated letter to Norman O'Neill, which I think is worth almost quoting in full as it establishes the background for their flight from France (Delius's capitalisation and punctuation):

Grez-sur-Loing Seine et Marne 15th Sept. 1914

My dear Norman - I received yesterday your letter & 2 papers dated 14th & 15th August . . . We have been seeing life since I wrote you last. From towards the end of August up to the 7th of September there was an ever-growing panic here - The high road to Fontainebleau was a terrifying sight [.] as you know it is the chief road from Paris to the South & all day & all night it was one stream of fleeing refugees - Belgians, peasants from the North of France rich parisians - big 'camion militaires' filled with wounded - Autos filled with Officers & soldiers - it was a fearful sight - We sat every afternoon for a couple of hours watching this stream of terrified humanity rush bye [sic]. Then suddenly the news came that all the depôts of Fontainebleau had been evacuated in order to make room for the english army - & that General French had established his headquarters at Melun only 20 Kilometers from here - We then began arranging our house for a flight - We buried the silver & about 1000 bottles of our best wine - took all the valuable paintings down - took them off their chassis & rolled them up to take with us - I had had up to now 4 english flags on the house & the villagers began coming & imploring me to take them down as the Uhlans might suddenly turn up & qu'ils en voudraient plus aux anglais qu'aux francais. However we only took down our flags on the morning of our departure Saturday the 5th. We took a train for Orleans via Malesherbes intending to go to Nantes & then by boat to England - In Bourron we got standing room in a luggage van with 40 or 50 others & got to Malesherbes fairly quickly, there we had to wait 4 hours & at last were crowded with 60 others into a wagon à bestiaux which had just been evacuated by horses. There was at least 2 inches of horse droppings on the floor & we had to sit on our portmanteaus: we left Malesherbes at 5 pm & arrived at Orleans at 3-30 a.m. a distance of 60 Kilometers - there was not a room to be had in Orleans - the station was crowded with refugees sleeping on the floor everywhere - at last we resigned ourselves to our fate & passed the rest of the night on a bench not far from the station. When the hotels opened we luckily were able to get some café au lait at the Grand Hotel d'Orléans & the proprietor promised us the first room that should become free - This we got at night & we both felt as if we had been saved from a great catastrophe. We determined not to quit this hotel until we were bombarded out of it & so we stayed a week & had a most interesting time & very good food & coffee & wine - at our table were several officers, so we got the news before the rest of the town. There are at least 100,000 soldier[s] in Orleans - train after train

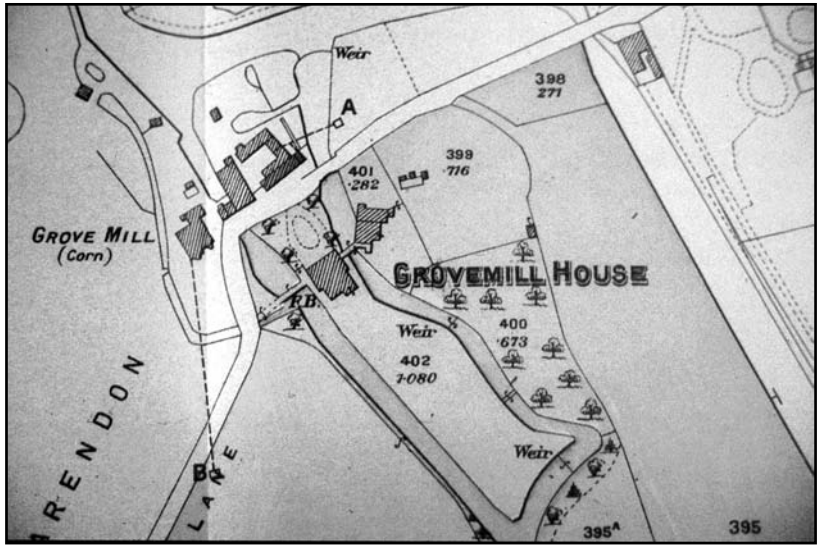
of english passed thro' going to the front and the high road was one long cavalcade of English Camions with supplies - By the by the organisation of the English army is admirable & the admiration of everyone - I spoke to a wounded english soldier who had been at Mons & Charleroi: he had a bullet thro his elbow & a shrapnel wound in the heel. He said that out of 1500 there were only 50 left - The most heartrending of all was to see the trains with wounded arrive. Only then does one realise what war is - We saw soldiers on stre[t]chers - with both legs shot off. There are 55,000 wounded men in Orleans & fresh coming night & day. As soon as we heard of the German defeat & repulse we determined to go back to Grez & started yesterday morning at 9.50**:** at Ma[r]lesherbes we had 7 hours to wait: & we saw a train full of German wounded come thro' - They looked awfully sick & some must have had fearful wounds as they were lying side by side in the straw - there were also 2 spies that had been taken - one was a big thick set looking german - bound hand & foot guarded by 4 soldiers - The other was a young fellow dressed as an English soldier. I spoke to him in English but he only knew two or 3 words - he spoke french like a french man - I suppose they are both dead by this time. On our way from Orleans to Grez we had a first class carriage entirely to ourselves - No one seems to be going in that direction - I shall never forget the look in the eyes of that big german spy He seemed to know that he was already as good as dead & seemed to take no interest whatever in anything anymore - Everybody, of course, wanted to have a look at him & one after the other they crowded up on to the marche pied to have a look at him -Just like a menagerie. After giving a look the women generally said - Ah! qu'il est drôle! Whilst the battle of the Marne was being fought, we distinctly heard the *boum-bou-bou-boum* of the canons here in Grez so we thought it was about time to get - as the Americans say - & not be caught in a déroute - we had of course no idea that it would be a great french victory - We can only hope now that the allies will follow up their victory & drive the Germans home again & end this fearful carnage - If, then, the Germans will only get rid of their Café Concert Kaiser & his numerous family & become a peaceable nation once more I think there will be no more war in Europe ever again -But they've got to be smashed first & the sooner the better - The french have been showing qualities which I never suspected in them - a tremendous soberness & earnestness - I saw regiment upon regiment marching to the railway station on their way to the front - No military music - no tambours silence - but every man looked in dead earnest & as if he were determined to do his best to the last - Write to me & let me know how things are in England - send me the D[aily] T[elegraph] war Corresp. account of the 5 days battle of the Marne - We have begun digging up our treasures -

With love to you both from Jelka & me, - I remain, yrs ever Frederick Delius

This, then, was the Deliuses' war when, at Beecham's urging soon after, they arrived in London. It was the middle of November 1914, and they were put up by Thomas Beecham - not yet Sir Thomas - at his London home, The Cottage, at Hobart Place. But Beecham, clearly envisaging theirs would be a longer stay, looked round for accommodation for them. We do not quite know how he came to take a short lease on The Mill House, Mill Lane, Watford, on the boundary of The Grove Estate, but this he did and Delius and Jelka were installed in December 1914, the month of their first letters from this address. Delius and Jelka refer to it as 'Beecham's House in the country' but it seems probable that he took a short lease specifically for them. We therefore have to assume that Beecham paid the rent.

Grove Mill Lane was a noted beauty spot in Watford in the early years of the century, the subject of many picture postcards. The surrounding woodlands, known as Deer Spring Wood were the location for the bringing on of game birds for the local estates, and although today the lane runs off the St Albans Road shortly before the roundabout leading to the M25, complete with speed camera, once one has turned into it, in spring time at least, it bears a striking likeness to its representation nearly ninety years ago. So, despite the mill now converted to residential accommodation, we have a good idea of the outlook and general ambience when Delius was there. In particular the Mill is located on the river Gade where it divides, one stream forming the mill race.

In researching this period of Delius's life our first problem is in identifying just which house he lived in. We know from the letterhead he wrote from during this time that it was in 'Mill Lane' and that this later became 'Grove Mill Lane'. Fortunately the house in which Delius lived from December 1914 to July 1915, and where he wrote so much music, was sold by auction soon after the First World War,



and, even more fortunately, the local history section at Watford Central Library has a copy of the prospectus and map, which must show the house very much as it was in Delius's day. Its delightful aspect today is as a result of later extensions and decoration. Indeed this raises another issue: did the Deliuses occupy the whole house or were they camped out in one wing or what seems to have been an attached cottage? - the latter seems a decided possibility.

On 8 December 1914 Delius wrote to Philip Heseltine from Grove Mill House, and over the next six months there followed another 25 surviving letters and post cards, until they left on 5 July 1915. These, or copies of them, are preserved in the Delius Trust Archive and I am most grateful to the Archivist of the Delius Trust, Dr Lionel Carley, for making available his transcripts for this article. There is one notable curiosity - indeed a feature that at first comes as a shock for letters written from Watford in wartime - a number of them are written in German, and are addressed to Delius's publisher Emil Herzka at Universal Edition in Vienna, letters which were apparently safely transmitted and received. Such letters seem not to have been interrupted or intercepted in wartime until after Delius left Watford.

Although after they left Watford the Deliuses were not complimentary about it, Beecham's choice of a country location - even in winter - seems to have stimulated Delius's imagination, for in this six month period Delius was working consistently and several major works were completed or progressed here, while others dated during the Watford months were clearly conceived and completed at Grove Mill House.

At the beginning of December 1914, Delius went with Beecham to Manchester, where Beecham conducted two orchestral extracts from his opera *A Village Romeo and Juliet* on 3 December, and where he heard May and Beatrice Harrison play the Brahms Double Concerto. After the concert the music critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, Samuel Langford, introduced him to the young soloists. In the light of their success with the Brahms Double Concerto, Delius promised them a double concerto from him. Returning to London he immediately took up residence at Grove Mill House, Watford, where the concerto was conceived and composed.

Grove Mill House from the garden

Grove Mill House - from the gate

Grove Mill House - the river from the garden

Photographs by Lewis Foreman

It thus constitutes the most significant piece of music ever written at Watford.

In his life of Delius, Beecham makes a very throwaway reference to this 'house in the country' which he had put at Delius's disposal. Yet, in fact he must have gone to considerable trouble to find what he clearly hoped would be a congenial spot for the Deliuses during their enforced exile, complete with country setting, a river and canal, the sound of water over a weir and in the rush of a mill wheel. He must have been trying to find landscape as congenial and idyllic as that they had left behind in France. As will be seen from the map the garden is surrounded by the river which divides before it goes through the mill-race across the lane under which it passes. The house is thus surrounded by a stream and at the foot of the garden where the two strands reunite it is wide enough (although much narrower) to have startling resonances of the tree-fringed bank of the Loing at Grez.

The difficulty has been trying to discover which house the Deliuses actually lived in. As with so many problems of this sort from the earlier years of the century, the reason why one has not been able to put one's finger on the property is because it changed its name. There is a mill house, and my first assumption was that it must be the Deliuses' house. But it was clearly the house across the road in which the Deliuses found themselves. The clue comes with the sale of the house in question by auction after the First World War, for which there was a published prospectus, a copy of which is, fortunately, preserved in the Watford local history collection in Watford Central library. From the map attached to this pamphlet it becomes clear that the property now known as The Dower House was known for many years, and especially during the First World War as Grove Mill House. Once

Grove Mill House from the garden, 1922
courtesy of Lewis Foreman

one has made this identification other pieces of the jigsaw fall into place.

Owned in the 1960s by the television chef Fanny Craddock, Grove Mill House was known in the nineteenth century as an appendage to the estate of Lord Clarendon, whose stately home The Grove is above Grove Mill Lane in what were once extensive grounds. The earliest literary mention of Grove Mill House dates from the memoirs of Lord Clarendon's niece Maria Theresa Earl. From the viewpoint of Delius the most important feature of the house is the fact that the long-established garden is surrounded on three sides by the river. In fact in Delius's day the garden was probably rather ruined but Maria Earl in her book *Pot-Pourri from a Surrey Garden* remembers how it appeared to her in the mid-nineteenth century: '. . . a beautiful wild, old-fashioned garden. This garden through circumstance, had remained in the hands of an old gardener for more than thirty years . . . Almost all that has remained in my mind of my young days in this wonderful old garden is how wonderfully the old man kept the place. . . . An ever-flowing mill-stream ran all round the garden; and the hedges of China-roses, Sweetbriar, Honeysuckle, and white Hawthorne tucked their toes into the soft mud, and throve year after year.'

The Grand Union Canal also runs very nearby and does an elaborate L-bend to pass the house and the adjacent mill. From the garden of Grove Mill House which the river passes on either side, it appears to encircle it at a higher level, and so the shape of barges and those travelling on them can be seen. Very much 'boatmen on the river' with all manner of Delian resonances of 'travellers we a-passing by', seen as shadows through mist with distantly echoing voices they must be haunting indeed.

Beecham's ploy would have doubtless been more successful if he had managed to have Delius arrive in the spring rather than the winter. Yet to the visitor today, the parallels with Grez-sur-Loing are remarkable and I reproduce one or two images of the garden today; why not try them while you listen to a few pages from the Double Concerto which possibly it had some hand in inspiring. I am most grateful to the present owners Mr and Mrs Webb for their hospitality in allowing me the freedom of the garden to take these photographs during the summer of 1999.

Frederick Delius and his wife Jelka had arrived at Grove Mill House by 8 December 1914, for he wrote from there to Philip Heseltine on that day. Unfortunately what is probably the first letter from Grove Mill House is undated, and shows us Delius trying to keep in touch with his publisher, Universal Edition in Vienna. The letter is in the hand of his wife Jelka and it is written in German. This translation is by Lionel Carley.

Grove Mill House Watford Herts England December 1914

Dear Herr Direktor,
I obtained your address through Dr Ethel Smyth. I was *very* pleased to know that you are well and that you did not have to go into the morasses of Poland. We have been here in London for just a fortnight, up to then we stayed in Grez, where the war goes unnoticed. For the next 2-3 months the above will be my address. Concert life in England goes calmly on as if nothing had happened. Beecham intended to give my Arabesk already at the last Philharmonic Concert, but he could not get any material. Could you not send it here via Holland. Score & parts, then I will listen to it here & it can then finally be printed together with the English translation. I think it best if you send it to Th. Beecham Esq 8A Hobart Place London S.W. If possible please send me also I copy of the corrected score & parts of my Piano Concerto.

How do matters stand with my Fennimore & Gerda in Cologne? I have already asked my friend H. Suter in Basel to write to you about it. I am *very* worried that the entire material of this opera is in Cologne. I no longer have a copy at *all.* So if Cologne should be bombed & the theatre burnt down, my work would be irretrievably lost. Couldn't you get back at least *one* full score & one piano score. Beecham would like to give the work here in London; for that, however, I must have the text translated and so need the piano score.

Let us hope that this dreadful war will soon come to an end & that you and your company do not have to suffer too much from the results of this situation. I should very much like to know how Brecher is? Is he in the war? And Fritz Cassirer - Berlin? Dr. Siegel? Dr. Cahn-Speyer? And all other friends. We are worrying about them all. And how is friend Schreker? please remember me cordially to him & his wife, also to your nephew? I just hope that he has not had to enlist!

With kind regards & best wishes for your continued well-being
Yours
Frederick Delius

On 23 December Delius wrote again to Heseltine advising him that it was a half hour walk to their temporary home from Watford Junction station. At this time there are a number of letters to Herzka in Vienna and on 18 February Delius writes to tell Heseltine he has written 'another song [to] words by Thomas Nashe'. This is his setting of *Spring, the Sweet Spring* written at Grove Mill House in early February 1915.

It seems certain that Delius wrote at least three of the *Four Old English Lyrics*, at Watford. The first was undoubtedly *Spring the Sweet Spring* which became the third song of the set.

In March we have him writing urgently to Heseltine:

Grove Mill House - postcard c. 1910
courtesy of Lewis Foreman

> 'Grove Mill House 24 March 1915 - Will you kindly get me a dozen sheets of music paper (song paper) and send them at once'.

The fact that the second and fourth Four Old English Lyrics are dated March 1915 suggest they were the works Delius was preoccupied with then, and in fact the words set are three stanzas from Ben Jonson's *Underwoods*, the words 'So white, so soft, so sweet is she' and Herrick's *To Daffodils*. It seems very probable that the daffodils were out in the garden at Grove Mill House in February and March 1915.

Other works mentioned while they were at Watford, include *Requiem*, the completion of the First Violin Sonata and the completion of the four *North Country Sketches*. In a letter to Heseltine postmarked 2 April, Delius writes:

> 'come down here again . . . Also North Country Sketches when they are finished - the Music Club Soirée is fixed for April 29th - On the 15th Beecham is doing something out of "Koanga" with the Philharmonic'.

From Watford Delius was enjoying a succession of London performances of his music, and on 10 May, at Queen's Hall, Beecham gave the first performance of *North Country Sketches,* and in the weeks before Delius had been fussing over the preparation of parts, and the programme notes written by Heseltine. Thus on 23 April, Jelka writes to Heseltine:

'Fred is anxious about his North Country Sketches. He has been awaiting them every day . . . Fred is just better after a perfectly horrid bilious attack.'

And again: - 26 April
' Not yet received the score of North Country Sketches . . .'

Relief: - 27 April
'Music just arrived'.

Delius certainly returned home from Watford Junction Station on foot when he went to London, and it seems highly probable that on fine days he would have walked in the surrounding countryside. By walking for perhaps three miles up Grove Mill Lane he could have arrived at the back of Croxley Green and from there it would have been but a step down the Hill to Rickmansworth Station. We have no way of knowing if Delius actually did this, but if he had done so he would probably have taken tea at the Victoria Hotel, where three years on, Arnold Bax would stay for several weeks after he had left his wife. And from here, too, during the Second World War Keith Douglas organised the Proms.

Thanks to Mr and Mrs Webb of Grove Mill House, Lionel Carley and The Delius Trust archive, Watford Central Library, and the Rickmansworth Historical Society for whom an earlier version of this article was presented as part of a survey of composers and musicians in the Rickmansworth area.

AN EARLY MANUSCRIPT REAPPEARS

Robert Threlfall

Somewhat vague references to *Negro Songs* appear in some early listings of Delius's manuscript legacy. Grouped, perhaps understandably, with material relating to the opera *Koanga*, the MS here considered was later misplaced and overlooked for years. Only now has it come to the surface again; the present survey is thus a belated report on an item of exceptional interest, of which a clinical description is best placed first.

The MS was originally laid out as a fair copy, in ink. It consists of a single gathering of six bifolia (= 24 unnumbered pages) of 20-stave paper (308 x 229 mm), bearing the supplier's embossed stamp 'Lard / 25 R.Feydeau / Paris' in an oval border. On the upper half of page (1) is inscribed the title in ink:
Neger Lieder / Im Volkston / Negro Songs / Soli Chorus & Orchestra / Fritz Delius
The score runs consecutively from pages (2) to (21) and is neatly laid out for voices and small orchestra (double woodwind, 4 horns in F, and strings). The string parts are more or less complete but the wind instruments are only indicated occasionally (and even so are often deleted). The first song 'I will meet you when the sun goes down', commences in F, *Allegretto*, 2/2; the solo baritone leads and the whole first verse is then repeated by the 4-part chorus. On page (7) the tonality changes abruptly from F to A major and the second verse is set on similar lines. (The baritone entry on page 2 was marked in pencil perhaps later, 'he' and the solo voice at the change to A major 'she'; maybe implying a contralto for contrast?) At the second bar of page (11), with an equally abrupt return to F major, the third verse begins, set in similar fashion to its predecessors; it concludes on page (14).

On page (15) an entirely different song begins in C, *Allegro*, 2/4, 'Let us dance tonight when the moon shines bright'. The baritone leads, as before, and a pizzicato string accompaniment closely recalls that of the Plantation Dance from the third movement of the *Florida Suite*. Twice an oboe skirl brings a note of contrast, and the chorus's final cadence rises to a shouted top C at the finish (on p. 21). Whereas the first song was later incorporated into Act 2 of the opera *Koanga*, the harmonies by then being rendered somewhat more subtle and characteristic, the second song is not used elsewhere in the composer's mature work.

It is no surprise to find that Delius later treated this manuscript in similar fashion to many others which remained without his final authentication. Firstly a very few slight retouchings are evidence of a partial review of the first (but not of the second) song. Secondly, spare staves on several pages have been used for memoranda which do not specifically relate to the two songs here so neatly set out. On the lower half of page (1) are several pencil 2-stave sketches of melody and accompaniment, among which the title 'Negro Rhapsody' is boldly inscribed. The upper half of page (7) reveals (obviously later) ink annotations for voice and

accompaniment, in which the name Palmyra twice occurs (the motif associated in the opera with Koanga's curse may also be identified). Pages (22-23) apparently do not continue from pages (2-21). Pencilled notations, presumably for horns, bassoons and basses on (22), only hint at a close in B minor; the lower half of (23) is partly overwritten with two 2-stave notations of other matter.

Page (24) is the most interesting – and, in some ways, enigmatic. At the head stands a note, in an entirely different, unidentified, hand of the Berlin addresses of three of Delius's Leipzig associates – Busoni, Nováček and Borgstrøm. (Busoni did not reside at the given address until June 1895 . . .) Then, after a couple of lines of miscellaneous jottings, Delius scrawls 'Nigger dances & chorus 2 Act Plantation nigger melodies [?]'. After another two bars of unrelated material, there follow ink notes on seven pairs of braced staves. These reveal an early draft which agrees with the music found in the published vocal score of Act 2 of *Koanga* at page 62, then page 64, then reflecting (though less closely) the turn from A flat to F major as there defined. Towards the end Delius has overwritten the direction 'dialogue between Miss [? = Clotilda] & Martinez about Palmyra nigger songs joining in'. Halfway down the left hand margin of this page, almost certainly in Delius's own hand, is the cryptic dating '1884/1885'. Perhaps it is now time to follow up this last clue.

Firstly, it is quite clear that this date cannot be that of the actual preparation of any of the present manuscript. The Lard paper of which this is an example was used by Delius in his Paris period, which only commenced in 1888. Also, the typical thicks-and-thins of the pen used to write the music of the main text can also be seen in other dated MSS chiefly of the period 1888-1891. The conventionally-drawn bass clef is another characteristic of this pen and period. Delius's first mention of the opera which later became *Koanga* was in a letter to his one-time Florida neighbour, Mrs Jutta Bell, written on 29 July 1894; it was not until 9 February 1896 that he informed the same correspondent that he was actually working on the piece. It can only be, then, that 1884-5 – the time of Delius's residence at Solana Grove – was the date of first recording these songs, thus confirming the time of those early musical experiences which he later maintained to have determined his decision to compose. His placing of the dates 1884-5 beside the banjo-and-bass material for *Koanga* Act 2 may well be an indication that this too is a literal reminiscence of Solana Grove music-making and hence that the music of that opera was the result of a longer time of reflection, starting earlier than hitherto assumed. The orchestral suite *Florida* basically dates from 1887; but the version of the third movement (Sunset) with which we are familiar was rewritten in 1889. The resemblance of the banjo-like figuration, so remarkable in that section, to the accompaniment of the second song of the present group has already been noted; maybe this is another pointer to the most likely date for the writing of the present MS, then, as 1889-90?

It should be noted that the layout of Delius's setting of these Negro Songs – baritone solo and chorus – obviously reflects the custom of such singing as

recorded by many reliable standard authorities, e.g. 'the leading singer starts the words of each verse . . . and others, who 'base' him, as it is called, strike in with the refrain or even join in with the solo . . .' (*Slave songs of the United States*, Allen, Ware and Garrison, New York, 1867). The same layout persists for a moment in what is the acme of Delius's compositions on these lines, at the unforgettable entry of the baritone solo which introduces the final chorus in *Appalachia* (1902). A more sophisticated use of the same device is even seen in the second of the two *Songs to be sung of a Summer Night on the Water*; while the pattern, if not the technique, of baritone solo and chorus is found in its most idealised form in Delius's other masterpiece with an American background – *Sea Drift* (1903).

The importance, then, of this resurfaced early manuscript resides in its clear confirmation of the seed of Delius's serious compositional activity being planted in 1884-5 at Solana Grove; even if the growth of this seed needed the support of Thomas Ward and the technical direction of the Leipzig years of intensive study to develop to fruition in those two masterworks of 1902-3. This thread was to be overlaid in later years by influences from Scandinavia and from Nietzsche, with a consequent loss of the singular warmth only found in those early American works. In his subsequent years of progressive physical affliction, when the music might have been expected to reflect an increasing bitterness, the artist achieved an unexpected serenity in those later or final works, the Double and Cello concertos, those parts of the *Poem of Life and Love* preserved as *A Song of Summer* and even the *Songs of Farewell*, finally realised with such difficulty. Here the influences of all the earlier strands of his life and music are combined and resolved into a balanced 'third period' perfection, both of thought and utterance, which may yet come to be valued as the ultimate summit of his musical journey.

A scene from Delius's opera Koanga - taken from the Liverpool Empire Theatre programme for the October 1935 production

SUMMER HOLIDAY 1890: DELIUS IN JERSEY

Jane Armour-Chélu

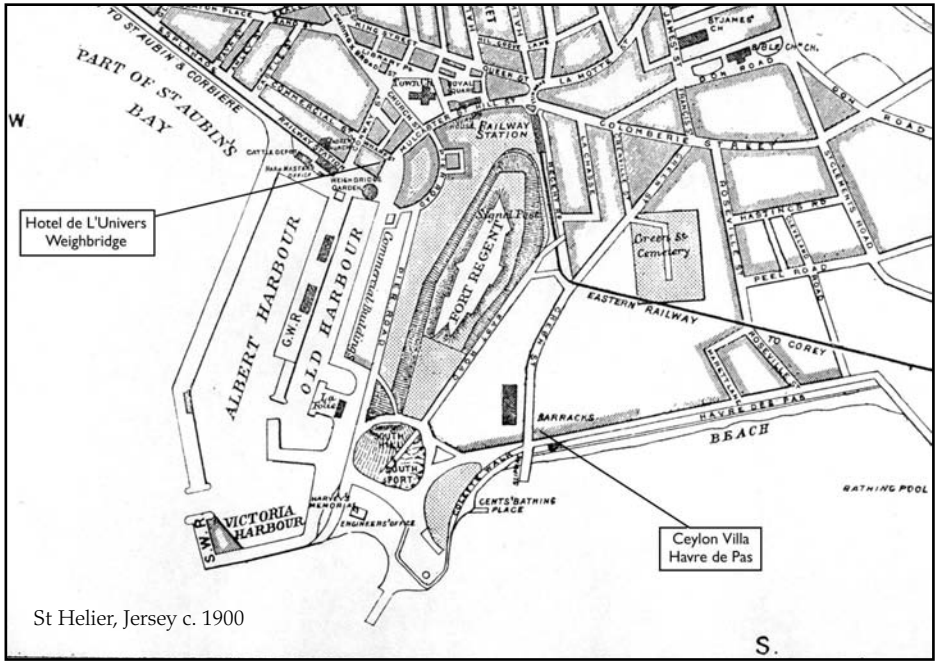
In the summer of 1890, Fritz Delius then aged 28, declined requests from his Norwegian friends to join them, and decided to spend time in Jersey, Normandy and Brittany. In his notebook he recorded for July of that year:

> *Jersey* [1890]
> Left Paris for Granville 8.30 a.m., Wednesday. Arrived Granville 3.20 p.m. Went to Hotel du Nord et des 3 Etoiles. Stayed one night. *Thursday.* Went to Avranches. Very wet weather. Took a walk on the beach. Had lunch at the Hotel de la Gare. Very good. Left for Granville at 2.30 p.m. Left Granville for Jersey at 5.30 p.m. Fine passage. Arrived at 7.30. Went to Hotel de l'Univers (Meunier). Stayed one day. Found room in Havre de Pas, Ceylon Villa. Mrs Fletcher. Very comfortable. Walked & bathed twice daily. Stayed 3 weeks, leaving for Granville on July the 26, Saturday, arrived at Paris at 11 p.m. (1)

Members of the Society who attended a London meeting in March 1996 may recall being shown a slide of the above entry in Delius's 'Red Notebook', taken by Rachel Lowe, and also one of the Hotel du Nord in Granville. (2) But I was not a member of the Society then, and it was only two years ago that I came across the notebook entry in the Appendix of Lionel Carley's *Delius: A Life in Letters*. I then discovered that although I have lived and worked on the island of Jersey for quite some time, I had been walking and driving past the places the composer had stayed without knowing. I wonder how many other members have visited the island in ignorance of the fact? This has prompted me to make enquiries and investigate further.

Fritz Delius would have arrived at St Helier, landing at Victoria Pier, on the steamer from Granville operated by The London and South Western Company. Brochures of the time indicate the time of the crossing from France to be 2 hours, a fact confirmed by the notebook entry. It would seem the timetables were more reliable in those days! Granville was one of two French departure points for the London and South Western Company, the other being St Malo, and presumably as the train journey from Paris to the latter was longer by at least 2 hours, it would make sense to take the shortest route.

Delius spent his first night on Jersey at the Hotel de L'Univers, at 1 Weighbridge, just a short walk from the pier. As he records, the hotel was managed at the time by a H. Meunier. The Meunier family seem to have arrived in Jersey from France sometime in the mid 1880s. The name is not recorded in the census returns for 1881, and in 1891, although several Meuniers are recorded (although not in the Parish of St Helier), either French-born if over 20 or Jersey-born for the children, there is not an H. Meunier listed. However, the *Jersey Times*



St Helier, Jersey c. 1900

Weighbridge, St Helier, Jersey c. 1890
Hotel de L'Univers on the right of the picture.
The gardens in front are now the site of the Bus Station.
Photograph: By courtesy of the Société Jersiaise Photographic Archive, Jersey

& British Press Almanac, does record the proprietor's name in 1890. H. Meunier may either have died by 1891 or left the island. The hotel was at the end of a block (the Southampton Hotel, which is still in existence, was at the other end) and the building still exists today on the corner of Weighbridge Place and Wharf Street, as the offices of Vedior Bis, a French employment agency. At the end of 1890 the hotel changed its name and became the Navy Hotel. As indication of the cost of the accommodation, advertisements for the next year indicate the rate for Bed and Breakfast to be 5 shillings; hot and cold baths were available; and interestingly it had a dark room for photographers.

Delius left the Hotel de L'Univers after one night and sought other accommodation on the eastern side of St Helier and Fort Regent the military garrison on the hill above the town. He found himself a room in the Havre de Pas area, in the home of Mr and Mrs Fletcher, called Ceylon Villa (address: 4 Havre de Pas). He must have been content there, as he records it as 'very comfortable' and stayed 3 weeks. Maria and William Fletcher, aged 49 and 48 respectively, were not Jersey-born; Maria had been born in Ireland and William in England.

Ceylon Villa is a granite built house, which at first sight from the rendered seaward side appears to be a bungalow, and was, as it is now, next door to the Seaforth Hotel. The house itself was built in 1784 by a shipbuilding family and is deceptively larger than first impressions would indicate. It has six large main rooms on three floors, and the attic rooms, which may well have been where Delius lodged, are 9 x 12 feet. The house had its own foreshore and until 1904

Ceylon Villa, Havre de Pas, Jersey
Photograph: Jane Armour-Chélu

there was still a shipyard, owned by the Allix family, about a hundred yards to the east. Like all similar Jersey coastal homes, the general access to the house, as now, was then from what we would consider to be the rear of the building. The photograph of the rear of the house today, indicates the number of rooms, the general sunny aspect, and shows a distinct contrast to the public view of the building from Havre de Pas.

Havre de Pas itself was not a bad location for the composer to stay. He wrote that he 'walked and bathed twice daily', and the area was conducive to both. There was a 'Gents bathing beach' two minutes walk away; presumably dedicated so because of the close proximity of the barracks for the troops from Fort Regent in adjacent Green Street. The nearby headland of La Collette had gardens and with the large tides in the area, at low tide it was possible to walk through the 'lunar landscape' of the rocky shore towards La Rocque in the east.

Jersey must have suited the composer; he stayed in spite of requests to be elsewhere. His letter to Grieg written whilst at Ceylon Villa seems to indicate contrasting opinions on the island:

> [Havre de Pas]
> St Heliers
> Jersey. (Channel Islands)
> [July 1890]
>
> My dear Grieg,
> I was very glad to hear from you again & I thank you very much indeed for your letter. I would have really loved to go to Jotunheim again but must be content with Jersey for this summer. But next summer! will you be there? Jersey is very beautiful & there is good bathing. [I] have lodgings near the beach & am doing some work. The [island] lies only 2 hours [from the] French coast, it [. . .] everything is dead & everyone looks [. . .] pious. I was in Leipzig for over three weeks & am very pleased with this trip. (3)

The letter, in which many words are obliterated, did not indicate to Grieg just when he would leave Jersey. Grieg wrote to him at his Jersey address on 11 August 1890; Delius had left the island on Saturday 26 July.

> Troldhaugen
> 11th August 1890
>
> My dear Delius,
> How sad that you are not coming to Jotunheim. On the day after tomorrow I am going by steamer to Skjolden in Lysterfjord (Sogn) and

from there to a saeter 'Turtegrösaeter' on the threshold of the Holy of Holies, with a view over to the Skagastölstindene.

Frants Beyer is coming with me as far as that, but his doctor has forbidden him to indulge in any mountaineering at all. So he stays there, and I have no travelling companion from then on. If I find none that I like, them I too will stay there for my 3 weeks. How wonderful it would be if you were to surprise me. It would certainly be very good for you, especially for your nerves, for I'll wager that Cupid is active on the island of Jersey too.

I have completed a piece for 2 pianos and now am enormously looking forward to no music-making! That is, of course, only in Jotunheim, for otherwise it is quite impossible to be without music! We must fix something for the winter. I have declined all invitations, because I want to work. I thought at first of Copenhagen – but cannot get Rome out of my head either!

Write soon. With many good wishes

Yours
Edvard Grieg

What is your address in future? (4)

Why did Delius stay in Jersey so long when his friends were requesting him to be with them? Lionel Carley in *Grieg and Delius* says that 'it is not clear why he should have done so, but it can probably be assumed that he made friends in the area during his summer holiday in St Malo in 1888'. (5) Grieg's comment, 'I'll wager that Cupid is active on the island' is interesting. Did Grieg know more about Delius's desire to be on Jersey? The letter to Grieg indicates that he was working, but the comments 'everything is dead' and 'everyone looks [. . .] pious' (6) seem to imply criticism of the island, which his notebook entry does not convey. The

Havre de Pas viewed from La Collette Gardens.
Ceylon Villa is on the left, next to the Seaforth Hotel, and just behind Hotel de la Plage.
Photograph: Jane Armour-Chélu

people of Jersey are not noted for being pious, although the area where he was staying had somewhat religious connotations, which I am sure he would have found amusing to say the least. Havre de Pas, translates to 'harbour, or haven, of the footsteps' and was the name given to the area because of hollows in the rocks below Mount Bingham, that were alleged to be footsteps made by the Virgin Mary. Did Fritz possibly encounter pilgrims to the venerated site on one of his walks!

Ceylon Villa - rear of the building
Photograph: Jane Armour-Chélu

Jersey was obviously an acceptable place for the composer to stay. At the time the population of the island was approaching 53,000, of which around 28,000 lived in the town of St Helier. English was generally spoken on the island then, although the official language was French, and the native language was old Norman French now called Jersey French. The Directory section of the *Almanac* for the year shows quite an active musical scene on the island; no less than 51 teachers of music are registered and there were 7 music sellers and musical instrument makers. Interestingly, there is a piano teacher listed as living quite near to where Delius was staying (3 Pierson Terrace, Havre de Pas), with the rather grand name of E. Savary d'Odiardi (RAM).

The *Chronique de Jersey* provides information on the island's entertainment at the time. During July 1890 there were 3 different productions billed for The Theatre Royal: *The Balloon*, *The Golden Ladder*, and *A Noble Lie*. At Westmount, Delius could have seen the visiting Rowland's New York Circus; there were French Artistes at the Royal Hall; elsewhere a Grand Diorama d'Ecosse; and at Trinity he could have attended a Grande Fête Champêtre! Transport on the island at the time was in some ways better than it is now. Walking north from Havre de Pas up Green Street, he would have found the railway terminus at Snow Hill, and could have made the 6-mile journey around the eastern coast to Mont Orgueil Castle at Gorey.

On the 26 July he returned to Granville on the steamer from St Helier, and arrived back in Paris at 11 pm. We have no evidence of his ever returning to the island, although his sister Clare spent 7 weeks there in 1909, and wrote to him on

her return that she had 'some very good friends there'. (7) Mrs Maria Fletcher of Ceylon Villa continued to offer lodgings, at least until 1908 when she still has an advertisement in the *Jersey 'Isle of Beauty' – A Souvenir Guide*. The entry, under 'Furnished Apartments – St Helier', after the address reads, 'on Sea Front. Good cooking and attendance'. She died in 1918.

The present occupants of Ceylon Villa (although now called Ceylon House) are Mr and Mrs Higham. They were rather surprised to discover that Delius had stayed in the house, when in 1994 a Mr John Halliday (who had a copy of Lionel Carley's *Grieg and Delius*) knocked on their door and advised them of the fact. Duly the proposal to erect a plaque commemorating the fact was considered by La Vingtaine de la Ville de St Helier at a meeting on 22 September 1994. The positive decision taken was reported in the *Jersey Evening Post* on 26 September with the line, 'This is the house where Delius lived', followed by the slightly exaggerated claim that the 'property was the composer's home'. (8) The plaque was erected in May of 1995. It reads: 'The composer Fritz Delius 1862 – 1934 stayed in this house'.

Mrs Elizabeth Higham tells me that the foreshore belonging to the property was sold after the war, or in Jersey's case the occupation ended, and the Hotel de la Plage opposite, which stands now on that land and overshadows the house, was built in the mid 1950s. The slipway at Havre de Pas is still there across the road, and although the building of the power station on the headland beyond La Collette has seen some considerable reclamation, the shore in front of the house is as rocky and interesting as it ever was. Had Delius visited a few years later he would have discovered that a bathing pool had been constructed a couple of hundred yards to the east. It was opened in May 1895, and is perhaps now the most prominent attraction on Havre de Pas.

Although we do not know just what 'work' Delius refers to in his letter from Jersey, it would be nice to think that maybe the scenery provided some inspiration for him. Some Jersey-folk have a belief that Debussy was inspired to write *La Mer* whilst staying on the island when he was there with his mistress, Madame Emma Bardac, in July 1904; the work, begun in 1902, was completed in 1905. But, that is another story.

References:

1. Lionel Carley: *Delius: A Life in Letters 1909-1934*, Scolar Press, 1988, p 401
2. *The Delius Society Journal No 119*, Autumn 1996, p 26
3. Lionel Carley: *Grieg and Delius*: *A Chronicle of their Friendship in Letters*, Marion Boyars, 1993, p 100
4. Ibid: p 102
5. Ibid: p 101
6. Ibid: p 100
7. Lionel Carley: *Delius: A Life in Letters 1909-1934*, Scolar Press, 1988, p 26
8. *Jersey Evening Post*, Monday 26 September 1994, p 20

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to Mr and Mrs Higham of Ceylon House; Anna Baghiani, Librarian at Lord Coutanche Library, and Julia Coutanche, Photograph Archivist for the Société Jersiaise; Peter and Joan Gosselin of Grouville, Jersey; The Jersey Archive; and to Lionel Carley, without whose books I could not have written this.

THE 39TH DELIUS SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SOCIAL WEEKEND

AT THE HATHERLEY MANOR HOTEL, GLOUCESTER, 18-20 August 2001

Returning to Hatherley Manor again, following our previous visit in 1998, was a delight. It is such an excellent, comfortable and homely venue, so conveniently placed just on the outskirts of Gloucester, and members arrived from all parts of the country and abroad to enjoy this annual gathering, this year linked to the 274th Three Choirs Festival on the theme 'A Celebration Of British Music.'

At the informal 'Meet and Greet' session, where old acquaintanceships were renewed and new ones established, with the usual 'Delian' style light-hearted banter, we were delighted to see Ron Kirkman from Geneva, Anthony and Beverley Noakes from Australia, Norman Jones from Hanover and William Marsh and David Duke from Philadelphia, USA. The assembled company, numbering over eighty, then sat down in the Hatherley Suite to an excellent buffet lunch of cold meats, seafood and chicken curry washed down with red or white wine, followed by cheesecake or cheese and biscuits and coffee and mints.

The 39th Annual General Meeting of the Society followed prompt at 3.00 pm, and before the formal business commenced, the Chairman, Roger Buckley asked all to stand in silent tribute to the memory of Dr Roland Gibson, the Founder of the Society, who had tragically passed away on 1 March (A tribute to him appears elsewhere in this Journal.) He will be greatly missed, but we were delighted to welcome his widow, Jean Gibson, to the weekend. We also recorded, with much regret, the death of long-standing and valued Midlands Branch member, Peter Trotman.

Before the formal business commenced, Roger Buckley read out apologies for absence, including one from our President, Felix Aprahamian, who stated that he was still helping societies where he could, but was now concentrating on staying alive! Also sending apologies were Vice President Robert Threlfall, and Committee members Jane Armour-Chélu (*Journal* Editor) and George Little (*Newsletter* Editor - still on a theatrical tour), and Jilly Little. Richard Kitching was asked to convey our best wishes to Wyn Evans, kept away by illness. Derek Cox, now rather poorly and in the 'Newlands' home at Stow-on-the-Wold, also nevertheless sent his greetings. (Sadly Derek passed away in the early hours of 29 August)

After opening the formal meeting and the adoption of the minutes of last year's AGM the Chairman said that all were delighted to be back at the venue found for us by Derek Cox for the 1998 weekend. The society had had another very successful year, and it had been a big first year for him new to the office, but he had been ably supported by a great Committee.

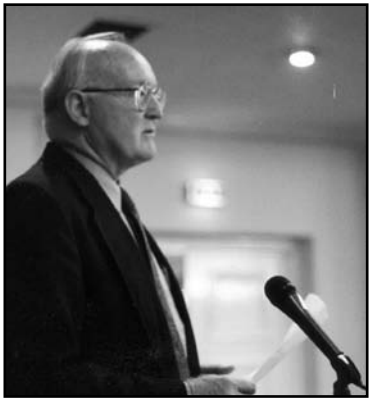
‘Never mind the weather, never mind the rain....’

A wet walk on Saturday morning -
Norman Jones, Kay Lindsey, Ron Prentice, Jean Gibson,
Ellie Caswell, Jo Radford and Ann Dixon.

Photograph: Ann Dixon

Arriving for the recital on Sunday -
Jean Billington, Ron Kirkman,
Paul Guinery and José Rialp

Photograph: Ann Dixon



Bill Marsh Chairman of the Philadelphia Branch
Photograph: Brian Redford

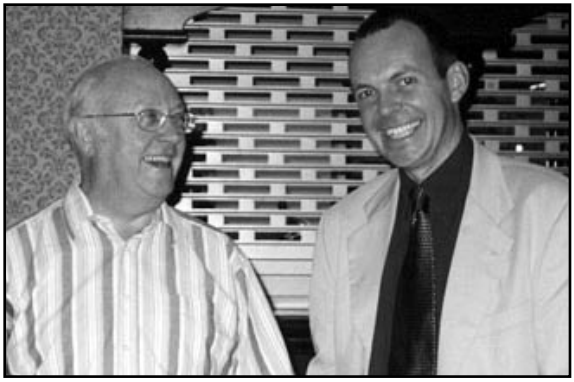
The Treasurer, Stewart Winstanley, made his report, paying tribute to the sterling work done by his predecessor, Derek Cox, and then took members through the Financial Statement of the year to 31 March prepared by Richard Maries & Co, F.C.A., explaining that, since we were a charity, the accounts now needed to be fully compliant with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993. The Committee was then re-elected en-bloc, no one else offering to stand, and Richard Maries & Co. were elected as Auditors. Branch reports were given by Richard Kitching (Midlands) and Ron Prentice (West of England) and Bill Marsh, as Chairman, gave a review of a wide variety of major events in the Delius Society of Philadelphia, USA, including its 25th Anniversary event, various concerts, *The Delian* magazine and several special compact disc issues featuring the music of Delius.

Brian Radford then reviewed London meetings for 2000-1 season and spoke about meetings scheduled for 2001-2, as detailed in the handout which was distributed. The last meeting, due to be held on 25 April 2002, would mark the 140th anniversary of Delius's birth and the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Society, and he invited anyone willing to make a contribution, or who had ideas for that evening, to get in touch with him. He paid tribute to Ian McPherson and his refreshment rota team of Michael Sunderland, José Rialp and George and Jilly Little, who had served us so well for many years. After wishing Ian continued recovery from his recent illness, he asked for volunteers for next season - Ian, Michael and José now wishing to stand down.

The Chairman advised that next year's AGM would be held at the R.A.F. Club, London on Saturday 20 July 2002, and that this would celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the Society. The Vice-Chairman, Paul Guinery, was coordinating a special exhibition to mark that event, and had asked for photocopies (<u>only</u>) of items of possible interest to be sent to him as soon as possible.

In closing, the Chairman congratulated Ray and Brenda Osborne on their recent marriage and Peter and Eileen Roberts who were celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary that very weekend.

After tea and biscuits members boarded two coaches for the short trip into Gloucester and free time before the evening concert in Gloucester Cathedral which featured Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* and the first public performance of his *Whispers of Heavenly Death* to words by Walt Whitman. The latter work was recently discovered among the music of Frederic Austin, grandfather of the festival's Chairman, Martin Lee-Browne, and featured the mezzo-soprano Pamela Helen Stephen. A rare Granville Bantock work

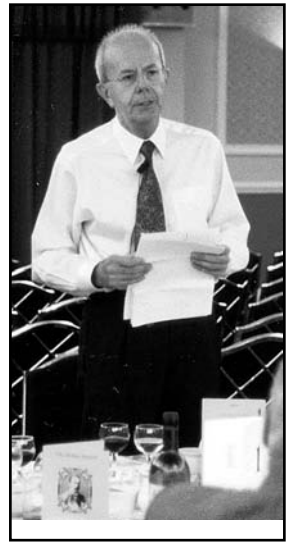


Midlands Branch Chairman Richard Kitching and Vice Chairman Paul Guinery
Photograph: Ann Dixon

(facing) Chairman Roger Buckley, Ann Boden,
David Lloyd-Jones (Chairman of The Delius Trust) and Lucy Boden
Photograph: Brian Radford

Honorary Secretary Anthony Lindsey and Programme Secretary Brian Radford
Photograph: Ann Dixon

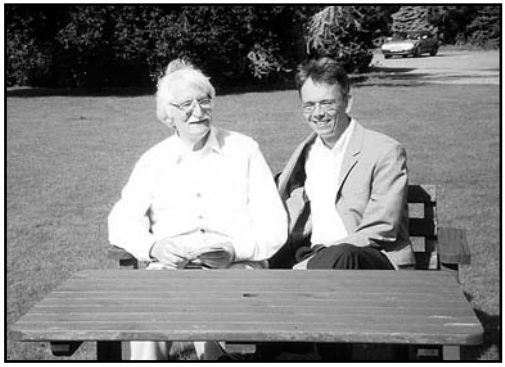
followed in the shape of the erotic *Sappho – Prelude and Six Fragments* for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, a neglected work only recently revived. The concert ended with a stirring performance of Elgar's *Symphony No. 2* during which conductor Richard Hickox drew deeply on the impressive resources of the Philharmonia Orchestra. Returning to the hotel for a nightcap, members socialised, renewed acquaintanceships and went over the events of the busy day.



Chairman Roger Buckley speaking at the formal lunch
Photograph: Brian Redford

All awoke to find a damp Sunday morning, but spirits rose after a hearty breakfast as a precedent to Anthony Boden's fascinating and very well-attended talk entitled 'Three Choirs – A Brief History', which he has researched in his capacity as the official Festival historian. Taken from his fascinating book, he traced the event back to its 1663 origins with the choirs of Worcester and Gloucester, the addition of Hereford in 1715, since which date it had been continuous apart from the breaks occasioned by two world wars. Originally the men of the three choirs, to raise much needed funds for charity work with the poor, sang only religious music. Secular music was only added much later and had to be performed in other than church premises, but was eventually introduced into Hereford Cathedral in 1759, but only on the basis that the money raised would go towards the repair of the Shire Hall. Handel's *Messiah* was first performed in Gloucester Cathedral in 1757, followed later by works such as Haydn's *Creation*, S.S.Wesley's choral works, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* (subsequently performed at every festival up to 1929), and Spohr's *The Last Judgement* - all performed during daylight hours of course. Works of a different order by Parry arrived from 1880, and by Elgar from 1890, with *Froissart Overture*, and then in 1902 the first Festival performance of *The Dream of Gerontius*. Delius himself came to the Three Choirs in 1901 to conduct his *Dance Rhapsody No. 1* in the Shire Hall, sharing the podium with Granville Bantock conducting his *Old English Suite* and Edward Elgar conducting his *Froissart Overture*, all heard during an afternoon concert. Anthony observed that it had taken years to persuade an enlightened Dean to at last allow *A Mass Of Life*, with its alleged anti-Christian ethic, to be performed, as it was to be this year. A vote of thanks for an absolutely splendid and deeply researched presentation was given by Richard Kitching, which was heartily endorsed by applause from the assembled company.

The formal lunch followed in the Hatherley Suite, with a menu of melon and coulis, roast lamb or strudel and accompaniments, apple pie and cream and coffee and mints. Our Chairman, Roger Buckley then gave a warm welcome to our special guests David Lloyd-Jones, Chairman of the Delius Trust, and his wife Carol,



Visitors from Germany: Norman Jones from Hanover and
Thomas Neuhoff (Conductor of the Bonn Philharmonic Choir)
Photograph: Anthony Lindsey

Members of the Society assembled for the AGM
Photograph: Brian Radford

Vice President Lionel Carley with Anthony Boden after his talk
Photograph: Ann Dixon

and Anthony Boden and his wife Anne, and as is traditional, we all raised our glasses "To the Immortal Memory of Frederick Delius".

Anthony Lindsey, Thomas Neuhoff, Stewart Winstanley, Jean Winstanley and Kay Lindsey at the graves of Ivor Gurney and Herbert Howells at Tigworth Church
Photograph: Anthony Lindsey

Then, despite heavy rain and thunder, it was off promptly at 3.00 pm in the coaches once more to Gloucester for the afternoon recital of songs sung by mezzo-soprano Helen Withers, accompanied by Roger Buckley, which was enthusiastically received (reviewed elsewhere in this Journal). It was lovely to see other Delius Society members there, including Christopher and Dawn Redwood, Peter and Carol Lyons and Peter Ratcliffe.

After a short break for tea and a stroll around Gloucester, members assembled in great expectation for the evening concert - a performance of Delius's *A Mass Of Life* in Gloucester Cathedral. Due to the illness of Susan Gritton, Claire Rutter, who had been travelling in Scotland on holiday in a caravan with her two children, took the soprano part. She was contacted late on Saturday, turned her caravan round and drove to Gloucester, rehearsed her part and then with the other principals on the Sunday morning, sang in the afternoon rehearsal and gave a superb performance in the evening. A full report on the concert is given elsewhere, but personally I thought as a performance it was memorable, principals, orchestra, choir and especially Richard Hickox (a Society Vice President) doing this difficult work full justice. The reception from the audience was enthusiastic, and the soloists and conductor returned to the platform several times.

Members were not finished yet however, for 101 of us repaired to the Moat Suite at the Hatherley Manor Hotel for what was billed as 'The Chairman's End Of Term Party,' with an excellent finger buffet and a copious flow of wine, beer and spirits supplied to order over the counter. What a gathering indeed! A few survived only briefly, but the more hardy souls were still holding forth well after 1.00 am.

The weekend had been a magnificent success, and our thanks must go to Anthony Lindsey, our worthy and very capable Honorary Secretary. His act will be a hard one to follow when he hands over the reins at the next AGM. So Tony – our most grateful thanks to you from all who were privileged to be there. Our warmest thanks also to the management and staff of the Hatherley Manor Hotel for their excellent service whilst we were there – it couldn't have been bettered.

Brian Radford

DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING

15 March 2001, BMIC, London

Alan Rowlands presents a programme of piano transcriptions of 3 Delius works and also works by John Ireland

Alan Rowlands' piano recital had been keenly awaited for several reasons. Among so much recorded music a live event is always an extra pleasure, but in this case the advance availability of Alan's excellently played and produced CD whetted the appetite all the more. Those of us who were members about 35 years ago may well recall a previous occasion when he introduced his piano transcriptions of some major Delius works. Listening recently to the CD recaptured the pleasure of that earlier performance and anticipated the recent even more thoughtful and mature recital.

After briefly describing his own early experiences of Delius's music Alan introduced his transcription of the *First Cuckoo*, using a recording of the Norwegian folk-song, which is its basis, and then playing Grieg's setting (which introduced the melody to Delius). Literally from the first chord, so misunderstood by his predecessor-arrangers, Alan produced a beautifully- balanced piano version of this well-known piece. Next he spoke in some interesting detail, from a pianist's point of view, on Delius's rather personal keyboard style. After taking the 1st *Prelude* as a more conventional example, the harpsichord *Dance* and the piano part of the Cello Sonata illustrated the characteristic Delian flow of often unrelated-seeming chromatic chords – unrelated at times even in pitch – which frequently supported a comparatively diatonic melody. Some extended excerpts from *The Song of the High Hills* realized at the keyboard then showed the extremes of harmony this work reveals: at one moment a harsh and gritty sequence of apparently haphazard discords, at another modal harmonies moving with the tranquil ease of a Vaughan Williams or Sibelius. Alan concluded his first half with a most convincing performance of his *In a Summer Garden* transcription. This was of particular interest in comparison to Philip Heseltine's arrangement of the same work (which Delius enthusiastically supported). The latter adds nothing to Delius's bare notes, for in Philip's view his version was essentially only a guide to the orchestral score rather than a pianistic transcription. Alan's version, the fruit of so many years' reflection and experience, adds the minimum needed for contrast, for dynamics, or to break up the sustained harmonies. (A particularly happy instance of the latter is in the 'river flowing past' section, where the added left-hand arpeggios mirror Delius's high woodwind figuration.) Played with undemonstrative assurance, this was a memorable experience for us all.

Apart from Delius, Alan is of course well known for his advocacy of the music of John Ireland, who was perhaps the only British writer of true piano music. It

was therefore only right that his work should also figure in this programme; *Month's Mind* and *April* made a happy choice (and, incidentally, maybe revealed the secret of Alan's success in his own piano layout of Delius's scores). Finally, and most notably, to *Brigg Fair*. As with the *Cuckoo*, Alan introduced the work with Joseph Taylor's singing, followed by Percy Grainger's exquisite choral setting. Alan's own version of Delius's orchestral score is completely pianistic, though calling for well-disciplined hands; and his performance revealed the variation of texture and dynamics which make this arrangement, though difficult, so successful. Paul Guinery's appreciative summing-up of a fascinating evening of beautifully presented piano music echoed the pleasure which we all felt.

It is rewarding to hear how well Delius's music sounds, even when divorced from its orchestral or instrumental colour and texture; the recent increasing interest in some of the established piano solo and duet arrangements is thus welcome. After reposing for some 30 years in one of my own files, the unpublished manuscript of Heseltine's arrangement of *In a Summer Garden* for piano duet is now being prepared for printing, as also is his similar version of the first *Dance Rhapsody* (now in The Delius Trust Archive) – watch this space!

Robert Threlfall

DELIUS SOCIETY (WEST OF ENGLAND BRANCH) MEETINGS

17 March 2001 (Joint Delius Society & Elgar Society Meeting)

'Good Friends - Granville Bantock and Frederick Delius'– a talk by Ronald Bleach, Elgar Society S.W. Branch Chairman

In spite of the rain that seems to have marred many of the meetings in Taunton, the joint get-together was attended by an audience of over twenty enthusiasts.

Mr Bleach compared the careers of Bantock, Delius and Elgar, who were contemporaries, Bantock being born in 1868, Delius in 1862 and Elgar 1857. All three composers were founder members of the Musical League, which was to fail after quite a short time. We listened to selections of music composed at roughly the same periods by all three composers.

Ronald Bleach, Elgar Society SW Chairman
Photograph: Ron Prentice

He revealed that Bantock had studied at the R.A.M. - but like Delius at Leipzig - only stayed for a year or so before he left to become the conductor of a theatrical company. He later became the musical director at New Brighton, near

Liverpool, where he used to devote concerts to contemporary British composers. From 1900 he was Principal of the Birmingham School of Music, and following in Elgar's footsteps, in 1908 became Professor of Music at the University there.

After the lecture, Delius Branch Chairman, Ron Prentice, thanked Mr Bleach for a very enjoyable afternoon and agreed to speak on the life and music of Frederick Delius at an Elgar Society meeting in Bristol next season.

8 April 2001, Winswood House, Crediton, Devon
Sakuntala and other songs – performed by Christopher Redwood and Robert Threlfall

Robert Threlfall and Christopher Redwood
Photograph: Ron Prentice

The April meeting of the West of England Branch, which now seems to be an annual event, took place as usual at the home of Dawn and Christopher Redwood in Crediton.

An audience of Delius Society and Elgar Society members and friends enjoyed a programme of Delius songs sung by Christopher, who was in particularly good voice, and piano solos beautifully played by Robert Threlfall.

The programme started with Robert playing two pieces by Grieg - *First Meeting*, Op.52 no.2, followed by *Norwegian Melodies*, Op.17 (nos.16, 1, 3, 4, 5, 15 & 20).

Christopher then sang Delius's 'Twilight Fancies', 'Ein schöner Stern', 'Aus deinen Augen', 'Heimkehr (Vinje)', 'Thro' long, long Years' and 'Wine Roses'.

Following the songs Robert Threlfall entertained the audience with the *Plantation Dance and Nocturne* arranged for piano solo from the orchestral suite *Florida* by himself.

Finally Christopher sang - 'The Page sat in the Lofty Tower', followed by *Sakuntala*, with English translation by Christopher and the orchestral accompaniment arranged for piano by Robert, which is probably the first time anyone had heard it performed. Lastly he sang 'O schneller, mein Ross'.

The appreciative audience was then treated to a superb meal, prepared by Dawn Redwood, before setting off on their homeward journeys.

Ron Prentice

DELIUS SOCIETY (MIDLANDS BRANCH) MEETING

21 April 2001

'Carl Nielsen – Delius's Danish Contemporary' – a talk by Graham Parsons

Gwen and Graham Parsons welcomed this Midlands Branch meeting with their customary generous hospitality, and it was Graham who was our speaker for the evening.

Presenting a Nielsen programme to The Delius Society was justified firstly by the composers' close contemporaneity, but also by their common congress with certain Danish writers as sources for incidental music or for song settings. Three of Delius's Danish songs had already been set by Nielsen in the early 1890s, and both men based compositions on the works of Helge Rode and Holger Drachmann. Though there is no record of their ever having met, Delius and Nielsen must have had 'near-misses' in Germany, where Nielsen in 1890 was just too late in Leipzig, but could have encountered Delius in Berlin; in Paris, where in the 1890s Delius had considerable contact with the Scandinavian artistic community; and from time to time later on in Denmark or Norway.

Nielsen first met his future wife, the accomplished sculptress Anne Marie Brodersen, in Paris in February 1891. Both were on travel scholarships to France and Italy, and after a rapid courtship the two were married in the English church in Florence in May of the same year. The comparison between Anne Marie and Jelka Rosen is intriguing; both came from well-to-do families, each with a fortune, or expectation of one, greater than their men's. But whereas Jelka subordinated her art to that of her husband, Anne Marie persisted in developing her successful career, despite bearing three children. Her marriage came under strain because of her frequent and sometimes protracted absences pursuing artistic commissions. Jelka, both before and after her marriage, suffered periods of depression, very possibly exacerbated by the curtailment of her career.

Graham punctuated his overview of Nielsen's life and works with context and examples from all of the six symphonies, his major works. The range and versatility of his output were also well demonstrated in a broad selection of excerpts from, among others, the violin and flute concertos, wind quintet, suite for piano and *Maskerade* overture, as well as a number of songs. From these last, a most interesting comparison of the Delius and Nielsen treatments of 'Silken Shoes on a Golden Last' pointed up the radically different approach of the two composers. Nevertheless they did have in common a deep and lasting appreciation of the natural world and its landscape. Nielsen never lost his love for the idyllic environment of his rural origins, as evidenced by his last large-scale choral work *Springtime in Fünen*, which attracted a huge audience at its first performance in Odense in 1922. The musical philosophy of the two composers was essentially different, however. Nielsen's strength was his ability regularly to produce simple but effective melodies built into solid classical structures in a

strongly contrapuntal style. Robert Simpson, in his 1952 analysis of all the symphonies, speaks of the second as 'of unique originality and consistent with a power of organisation normally found only in the greatest composers'. Nielsen was an admirer of Bach, Beethoven and Mozart, hence the classicism, but his music was also challenging and innovative. The symphonies, highly individual in concept, identified more with human emotions than did the elemental but more romantic constructions of his contemporary Scandinavian neighbour Jan Sibelius.

In contrast to Sibelius, Nielsen's working life demonstrated continuing energy and disciplined application. His composing and conducting skills were at least in part self-taught, certainly self-improved. That he achieved real success, especially in his own country, was supported by a number of favourable quotes from other musicians. Through these Nielsen's special qualities were touched upon, though not all of the authors of the comments were named. Nevertheless Graham made a fair fist at identifying within a short talk Carl Nielsen's aims and philosophy in composition, not least by quoting the composer himself: for example his admiration for those past composers "who gave their times a black eye"; and, on his own clarinet concerto, as "at once warm-hearted and hysterical". Altogether he comes over as a feet-on-the-ground, clear-sighted character with strong and sometimes pungent views on life, full of questing musical ideas.

Nielsen's output included two operas and many choral pieces, apart from the extensive range of orchestral and chamber works. He also wrote for piano and organ, for the latter notably the substantial *Commotio* (1931).

In middle age Nielsen suffered from angina, which created problems at home and limited his outside engagements. The after-effects of an accident, in which he was knocked down by a tramcar, probably hastened his death in 1931. A similar incident forty years before had caused the demise of César Franck in Paris. One wonders if there exists for composers an occupational hazard in negotiating city streets while turning over musical figures in the head.

Graham struck a thoughtful balance between narrative, critical review, and musical and video references. Everyone appreciated this careful preparation of his presentation, which provided such an instructive and enjoyable evening, and we thank him for it.

E. E. Rowe

DELIUS SOCIETY (MIDLANDS BRANCH) MEETING

23 June 2001

Piano recital by Lukas Vondracek

The final meeting of the Midlands Branch season was held at the home of Branch Chairman, Richard Kitching. This was a rare treat, being an opportunity for branch members and their friends to enjoy the exceptional skills of the 14-year old Czech pianist, Lukas Vondracek. Both his parents are professional pianists and his first public concert was at the age of four. He has been coming to England every year since first performing at the Derbyshire Wirksworth Festival five years ago. He has since performed at the Buxton, Ribbledale and Warwick Festivals and at Steinway Hall, London. He travels and performs widely throughout Europe and now regularly visits the USA.

Brian Radford, Richard Kitching with Lukas Vondracek at the piano
Photograph: Brian Radford

It has to be said immediately that no allowance has to be made for his age. His piano technique is masterly, and his musicianship in a wide-ranging programme was very mature. He started with Mendelssohn's *Variations Sérieuses*, followed by Rachmaninov's arrangement of the *Scherzo* from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Lukas then played a demanding Chopin group consisting of the Ballade in A Flat Major op 57, the Nocturne in F Major Op 15 and the *Grande Valse Brillante* in A Flat Major Op 34. This was Chopin from a pianist with East European blood and displayed both power and delicacy.

The second half of his programme opened with the authentically contrasting sound-world of Debussy's *L'lsle Joyeuse*, We were then introduced to a Czech composer unknown to most of us in performance, namely Vitezslav Novak (1870-1949), a pupil of Dvorak. We heard his *Sonata Eroica* Op 24, a large-scale work which sprang from a motif derived from a Moravian folksong. This was a most impressive work and encourages further exploration of this composer. The official recital closed with a powerful performance of the Prokofiev 3rd Sonata. As an encore we were dazzled by an immaculate rendition of Grainger's *In Dahomey*, complete with protective wrist cuffs - a piece introduced to Lukas Vondracek by Richard Kitching last year and memorised, we are told, within 3 weeks.

Just when Richard was heaving a sigh of relief that his Bechstein had survived its ordeal by virtuosity, Lukas was persuaded to play again for those remaining,

including Liszt's transcription of the Schubert *Gretchen am Spinnrade* and a complete run-through of the 1st Movement of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1. Lukas is preparing this last work for his debut performance with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra under Vladimir Ashkenazy in September.

More than fifty of us enjoyed a feast of piano music played by a hugely talented young musician. We all felt privileged to hear someone who is surely destined to achieve an international reputation. Watch out for the name.

We are more than grateful to Richard for arranging a wonderful musical evening, and blessed with beautiful weather, refreshments on the lawn in the best Glyndebourne/Weston Underwood tradition.

Graham Parsons

'Several times in our newsletters we have mentioned Delius in relation to Debussy. Not only were they contemporary, but the terms 'Impressionist' and 'Late-Romantic' have been used in reference to both. Delius thought highly of "L'Après-midi d'un Faune" and "Pelleas" for example, attracted by Debussy's harmony and recognising a kindred spirit. When we remarked in our previous newsletter that one might argue that Delius was "more advanced" than Debussy, we deliberately underlined the word "might" for, in the nature of the case, such statements as we made could only be general or average, which, is of course, is always relative to individual variation'
Roland Gibson, Letter to Members, May 1962

CONCERT REVIEWS

Saturday 30 June 2001, Hinchingbrook Performing Arts Centre, Huntingdon
Huntingdonshire Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir
conducted by Marcus Pashley
Soloist: Richard Edgar Wilson (tenor)

Delius: *A Song of Summer*
Delius: *A Late Lark*
Grieg: *Norwegian Bridal Procession* **(orch. Delius)**
Elgar: *Serenade for Strings*
Finzi: *Intimations of Immortality*

When I saw details of this concert in *Journal* 129, I decided that I must attend regardless of the long journey from Somerset, as the programme contained my favourite of all Delius's works, *A Late Lark*.

The venue was the Hinchingbrook Performing Arts Centre, a new building on a large campus just on the edge of Huntingdon. The orchestra is one of the largest amateur orchestras in the region and the choir of eighty-six is highly regarded. This is not surprising because the musical director Marcus Pashley, who read Music at Manchester University, directed and developed the University Chamber Choir and was a founder member of the 1993 BBC Choir of the Year. He teaches choral conducting for the Association of British Choral Directors and is a tutor at the Harrogate Choral Festival.

The concert started with Grieg's *Norwegian Bridal Procession* orchestrated by Delius. This short work was a good opener for the proceedings, with excellent solos from the flute and clarinet near the beginning and some fine playing from the brass later. However, probably due to nerves, the strings were not up to the standard of their colleagues.

This was followed by a fine rendition of *A Song of Summer*. The strings had, by this time, got over their nerves and the high violins shimmered in the clear sky; the cellos and basses imitated the rise and fall of the waves; and the flute, the seagull gliding by, just as Delius had described to Eric Fenby. The orchestra played the crescendo to the climax near the end superbly and then faded away to a pianissimo at the last bars. A week or two previously we had been in Northumberland and visited the Farne Islands and Lindisfarne, where I heard this music in my mind and thought how well it described the natural sounds of the islands and sea.

At this point a number of players left the stage, ready for the performance of my favourite, *A Late Lark*. The oboe was played beautifully, making the hairs on the back of my neck stand up! The tenor soloist, Richard Edgar Wilson, was superb. His perfectly controlled voice was a joy to listen to. At' the smoke ascends in a rosy-golden haze' the cellos captured the ascending smoke with their curling upward arpeggios and the tremolo lower strings heralded the approach of

darkness. The final ascending chords after the word 'death' somehow seem to indicate a mysterious glowing light of what might be on the other side.

After this beautiful performance, the strings, who exceeded my expectations, played Elgar's *Serenade for Strings in E Minor*. I found this work, which I have played many times, rather ordinary after the Delius, but the orchestra played it well enough with good dynamics and a sonorous sound throughout.

The final offerings before the interval were three Motets by Stanford. These were unaccompanied and excellently sung by the choir, which clearly showed Marcus Pashley's passion for choral conducting.

The interval was followed by Gerald Finzi's *Intimations of Immortality*; a score that I had not previously heard but did enjoy. This work was first performed at the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival in 1950 and is a setting of words by William Wordsworth. There was some nice horn and string playing in the orchestral introduction and when the choir started singing, they were extremely polished. The soloist, Richard Edgar Wilson soared over the choir but was occasionally drowned by the orchestra.

It was a very long drive to hear this concert, but Brenda and I enjoyed it immensely and used the opportunity of being in East Anglia to visit John Constable Country before returning home to Somerset

Ron Prentice

SONG RECITAL :
HELEN WITHERS (mezzo-soprano), ROGER BUCKLEY (piano)
Sunday 19 August 2001, St Mary de Lode Church, Gloucester –
Three Choirs Festival

Many Delians gathered to hear for the first time Helen Withers who was accompanied by our Chairman, Roger Buckley, who seems to be a regular accompanist now at the Gloucester festivals. A sold-out house in the warm confines of St. Mary de Lode gave the two artists warm accolades throughout the program.

The opening songs by Edmund Rubbra**, '**It was a Lover and his Lass' and 'A Hymn to the Virgin' established right off that Ms. Withers had a high mezzo voice with good diction. Rubbra songs are not often heard, and this nod to the composer's centenary was most welcome. Then came Delius's four Verlaine settings in fine readings with my favorite being the 'Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit'. But the concluding 'Chanson d'automne' found Ms. Withers offering a slightly more sultry tone. Roger Buckley accompanied all of these with authority, but I felt the closed piano lid throughout the recital detracted a bit. (The Steinway was not

the rather loud instrument heard in 1998. Other singers during the week sometimes used the short stick, and for the first half of Stephen Varcoe's program the lid was at full height.)

Cries of disappointment were heard when the two programmed Howells songs were dropped because of a slightly late start and the length of the program. Given that the entire program ran less than an hour and a half with two encores including a restored 'King David' of Howells (sung beautifully), the cuts seemed a bit absurd. Finzi's 'Till Earth Outwears' originally announced was dropped in favor of three Hardy settings by John Ireland: 'Summer Schemes', 'Her Song', and 'Weathers'. Ms Withers sang these with confidence and the familiar 'Her Song' was especially fine.

Ursula Vaughan Williams
Photograph: Ann Dixon

A group of Rebecca Clarke songs followed: 'Infant Joy', 'The Cloths of Heaven', and 'Greeting'. These were given excellent performances with 'Greeting' being especially beautiful. Buckley here had some nice rippling arpeggios in the accompaniment.

Delius's 'Five Songs from the Danish' sung in German were most welcome. 'The Violet' rated a big star for me, and 'Irmelin' showed off some low tones by Ms. Withers. Roger Buckley has played these songs a number of times now, and his piano accompaniments were solidly supportive.

The novelty of the afternoon was the world premiere of Christian Wilson's 'Three Songs' to poems by Ursula Vaughan Williams: 'Joy Needs no Words', 'The Looking-Glass', and 'Silence and Music'. The first displayed a lovely lyrical line, and Buckley seemed somewhat more aggressive here compensating a bit for the

Roger Buckley and Helen Withers after the recital at St Mary de Lode Church
Photograph: Brian Radford

closed lid. But Mr Wilson seemed to prefer it down. The music for 'The Looking-Glass' fits the words perfectly. 'Silence and Music' was another crowd pleaser. These songs are firmly in the English Song tradition and should find a place in the repertoire of many singers. Both the composer and Ursula Vaughan Williams were on hand to share in the extensive applause of the audience.

Delius's *Sakuntala* was sung in German. Real drama was created in this piece, which in Delius circles, at least, has had a number of performances with piano. Orchestral colour adds a lot, but Roger Buckley has played this score frequently and his support always complemented the fine performance by Helen Withers.

After the Howells encore came one more: Finzi's last completed song, the setting of Robert Bridges''Since we loved' from 'Oh Fair to See', Op. 13. The final ovation was well deserved, and both artists had a most successful afternoon.

Bill Marsh

DELIUS: *A MASS OF LIFE* - THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL, GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL

Sunday 19 August 2001

Gloucester Cathedral itself, a building I now realise I haven't visited nearly enough, was as dominant a component as anything in this key musical event of the AGM weekend. Its origins were as an Anglo-Saxon monastery, later taken over by the Benedictines. William the Conqueror reconstructed it, his master-builders fashioning the solid Norman pillars of the Nave where, some nine centuries later on a rainy August night, considerable forces were grouped for Delius's equally imposing piece of musical architecture. If there were any doubts beforehand that *A Mass of Life* would not attract sufficient worshippers to the Delian altar, then the packed rows of an expectant 'congregation' were heartening to see. This concert was - without exaggeration - a crowd-puller. (Director of the BBC Proms, please note.)

A last-minute indisposition on the part of the soprano soloist, Susan Gritton, entailed an S.O.S to Claire Rutter, who selflessly abandoned a holiday in Scotland to come to the rescue. She joined an excellent team of soloists: the contralto, Catherine Wyn-Rogers; the tenor, Adrian Thompson; and the baritone (in the key role of Zarathustra), Alan Opie. The latter warmed to his task as the evening progressed and was surely at his most eloquent in the second part of the *Mass,* giving a moving performance of Zarathustra's closing 'Midnight Song'. Here, as in many similar passages where Delius's orchestral imagination is at its most inspired and inspiring, he was instinctively partnered by the conductor, Richard Hickox, an honorary Vice-President of the Delius Society and no stranger to the score, having

Richard Hickox, the soloists, the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Festival Choir take their applause after the performance of *A Mass of Life*
photograph: Brian Radford

recorded it for Chandos some years ago. He knows how to pace himself and his performers along the highways - and occasional byways - of the Nietzschean journey with a masterful grasp of its formal design.

On this occasion he secured some consistently ravishing playing from the Philharmonia Orchestra, led by James Clarke, with the woodwind and horn players in particular excelling themselves in the more tranquil and atmospheric shadings of Delius's score. But the granitic foundations that characterise so many other pages of the work were also firmly laid down; even if the genie was uncorked from the bottle at the very outset of Part One with startling sleight of hand - a gesture that seemed to catch not only the audience by surprise but also some members of the Festival Chorus. Delius's choral writing is cruelly demanding. Has that opening chorus, I wonder, ever been performed 'live' without sounding strained? Or maybe that's the point of it? But all credit to the massed voices ranged before the great Quire screen: elsewhere they brought off several key moments with panache and an impressive concentration of intonation and ensemble, notably in the latter portions of the score where there was a genuinely poetic and sensitive response to the conductor's vision.

A Mass of Life had never been performed at the Three Choirs Festival, various Eminent Divines over the years having shuddered at the thought of such a wickedly sinful work being vented in a house of God. With respect, the view that it is 'anti-Christian' is nonsense, as anyone who has taken the trouble to

understand the actual text will realise. Thanks to a more enlightened Dean and Chapter, an honest woman has now been made of *A Mass of Life* which could therefore be treated to the sort of acoustic it needs in which to prosper: resonant but not echoing, spacious but not cavernous, giving the notes room to breathe and resonate, but not befuddling the textures of Delius's tortuously chromatic choral parts. Sincere thanks are also due in equal measure to the tireless generosity of the Delius Trust in sponsoring the performance and to the Committee of the Three Choirs Festival in having the imagination and tenacity to champion the work in the first place and thereby give this still curiously neglected work the prominence - and 'respectability' - it so richly deserves.

Paul Guinery

THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL - PRESS REVIEW

Michael Kennedy, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 26 August 2001

Bravely and commendably, the 274th Three Choirs Festival, held at Gloucester, was this year devoted almost exclusively to British music and contained several 20th century choral masterpieces. These placed a heavy burden on the versatile Festival Chorus, as was particularly evident in the outstanding event, the first Three Choirs performance of Delius's *A Mass of Life*, hitherto regarded as unsuitable for a cathedral because of Nietzsche's text.

Its opening invocation to the Will is a dithyrambic paean of joy, even more exultant than Mahler's Eighth Symphony, and it was there that the chorus wilted although they later sang (in German, too) with poetic sensitivity and responded wholeheartedly to Richard Hickox's demands for subtleties of phrasing and colour.

There are times in this ambitious work when it seems like a very long walk to the Paradise Garden but we get there eventually in the magically evocative tone-painting in Part 2 with its horn-calls and the distinctive playing of the Philharmonia Orchestra's woodwind section and especially in the last half-hour when Zarathustra and the chorus sing their Midnight Song, music ablaze with genius which inspired the baritone Alan Opie to nobly expressive singing.

In the opening Philharmonia-Hickox concert, the special interest was the first known performance of a short and sombre *Nocturne for Mezzo and Orchestra* by Vaughan Williams, a setting of Whitman's *Whispers of Heavenly Death*. The recently discovered manuscript is dated January 1908, so it must be almost the last work VW wrote before he studied with Ravel.

It is a fascinating piece which suggests that this composer's evolution to maturity was even more complex than one had suspected. Already the tone-poet of the *Tallis Fantasia* and *London Symphony* is emerging. Pamela Helen Stephen was the lustrous soloist and then sang Bantock's Sappho songs, opulently scored

but fatally deficient in variety of mood and tempo.

The novelty in a song recital by the young mezzo Helen Withers, accompanied by Roger Buckley, was three haunting settings by 81-year-old Christian Wilson of poems by Ursula Vaughan Williams. In voice and looks, this impressive singer seems to have been born to sing Debussy's Mélisande, a judgment I formed after her exquisite performance of Delius's five Verlaine settings. She also sang (in German) Delius's four Danish settings and English songs by Ireland, Rebecca Clarke and, most memorably, Howells's King David. Her tone is strong and pure, her diction good and she gives full weight to the meaning of the texts.

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Notes:
1. dithyramb = a wild choral hymn of ancient Greece, especially one dedicated to Dionysus; also a passionate or inflated speech, poem or other writing (New Oxford Dictionary of English)
2. Delius wrote five Verlaine settings, but Helen performed only (the usual) four
3. Delius wrote five (not four) Danish settings, and Helen performed all of them

'A Mass of Life, a work so tremendous in its conception and power, so impregnated with loveliness of sound, so universal in appeal that mere words can give only the most meagre conception of its splendour'
Norman Cameron, The Liverpool Post, 16 June 1933

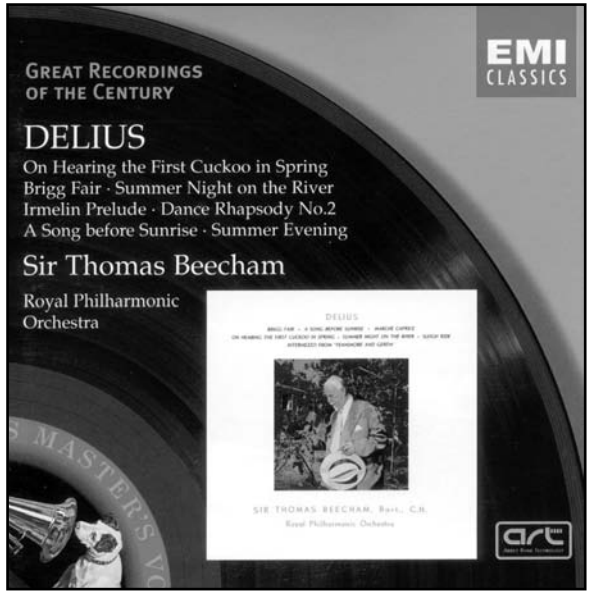
GREAT RECORDINGS OF THE CENTURY : DELIUS

- On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring, Brigg Fair, Summer Night on the River, Irmelin Prelude, Dance Rhapsody No 2, A Song Before Sunrise, Summer Evening.
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham
EMI: CDM 5 67552 2

Delians have never had it so good! In the new century, this thought should surely occur to any reviewer presented with a CD reissue of earlier recordings of Delius's music by Sir Thomas Beecham. Such discs now increase in number, so where to begin. All are desirable. Beecham's Delius always had the quality of extemporisation; it was never the same. This commended it to the composer whose total approval was never in doubt. So all these versions are equally valid as interpretations of ten pieces beloved by Delians.

The packaging of CDM 5 67552 2 already proclaims its provenance. The first of the dozen pages of its EMI booklet provides a clear reminder. Before the plastic case is opened, one sees a smaller square reproducing the sleeve cover of a much-loved monaural LP, instantly identifiable from the photo of Beecham enjoying the clement climate of Monaco when a tax-exile.

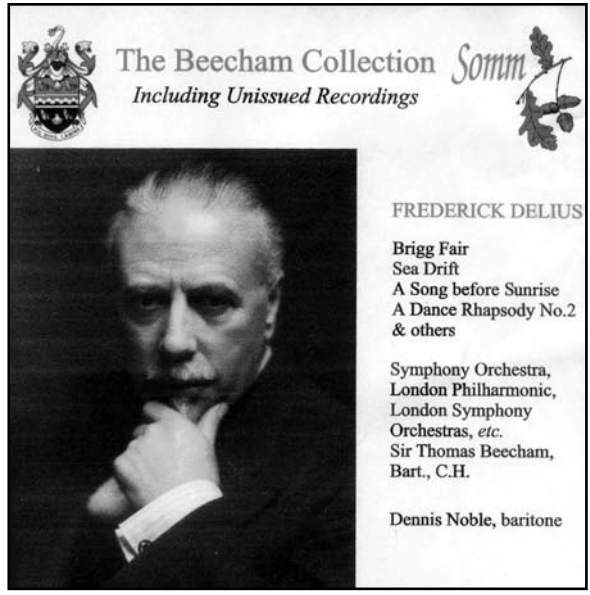
Digitally remastered in 2001, the original recording sessions, all with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra ranged, according to the printed information, from 1956 to 1957. Beecham died in 1961, so these discs offer Delians his last recreations of music by a composer whose music had cast its spell on him for more than half a century. The printed notes by Lyndon Jenkins, exemplary as an introduction to the Delius-Beecham partnership, are followed by their German and French translations. All this commends a notable issue in EMI's Great Recordings of the Century and a further gain in the cause of Delius.



Felix Aprahamian

The Beecham Collection: FREDERICK DELIUS:

Brigg Fair. Symphony Orchestra, recorded December 11 1928 & July 10 1929; *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* and *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* (from *A Village Romeo and Juliet*). Orchestra of the Royal Philharmonic Society, rec. December 19-20 1927; *Sea Drift**. Dennis Noble, Manchester Beecham Opera Chorus, London Symphony Orchestra, rec. November 11 1928; *North Country Sketches*: 'Autumn'* and 'Winter Landscape'*; *Song before Sunrise**; *A Dance Rhapsody (No 2)**. London Philharmonic Orchestra, rec. October 16 1945. (* previously unissued) TT 74' 45". SOMM-BEECHAM 10



This latest instalment in the SOMM Beecham series includes some of Sir Thomas's earliest Delius recordings and several test pressings that are being issued here for the first time. Beecham only started to record the works of Delius in the last six years of the composer's life. The first two records to be issued were of *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* and *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* with an orchestra that was assembled for the Royal Philharmonic Society's concerts and went under that name (not, of course, to be confused with the similarly named orchestra that Beecham formed in 1946). These recordings were made in the Fyvie Hall in the Regent Street Polytechnic, London on 19-20 December 1927. *The First Cuckoo* had been a regular encore during Beecham's winter tour with the London Symphony Orchestra in November and December 1926, and he had recently programmed both works with that orchestra. (Beecham had not conducted a Royal Philharmonic Society concert since 1918 but he was due to do so in March 1928 when he would receive the Society's Gold Medal, and he was to employ its orchestra for the penultimate concert of his 1929 Delius Festival.) Almost six months later, on 11 July with the LSO in the Central Hall, Westminster, he attempted to record *Brigg Fair*, presumably complete as four sides were taken, but this was not published for whatever reason. But the next day, in the same hall with the Royal Philharmonic Society Orchestra, *Summer Night on the River* was successfully captured on disc. It is in some ways a pity that this was not included

on the CD under review, not only because it is the companion piece to *The First Cuckoo* but because it would give some continuity to these early recordings. (The first of four recordings Beecham made of this work, it has been issued on Dutton CDLX 7011 and more recently on Naxos 8.110904.)

Next to be attempted was *Sea Drift*, on November 11 1928. This is the earliest of four studio recordings, although not one which he ultimately approved for release. The 120-strong Manchester Beecham Operatic Choir was making its first visit to London for a Royal Albert Hall Armistice Day concert with the London Symphony Orchestra at 3 p.m. that included *Sea Drift* (an appropriate choice for the occasion) and Elgar's *For the Fallen*, the LSO leader W. H. Reed taking over the conducting in many operatic solos because Beecham had an injured hand. Although this was a Sunday, *Sea Drift* was recorded that same day (presumably in the morning) in the Portman Rooms, London, the LSO for contractual reasons being named the 'Symphony Orchestra'. At that same venue, a month later and also on July 10 the following year, *Brigg Fair* was successfully taken down with the 'Symphony Orchestra'. Apart from some songs in which he accompanied Dora Labbette, the only other Delius recording that Beecham made during the composer's life-time was *Paris*, for the first of the three Delius Society volumes, though Delius was never to hear the test pressings because, as Eric Fenby tells us, they were held up by the French customs.

Brigg Fair comes first on this CD and makes a most suitable opener. Beecham made three commercial recordings of this much-loved work and this, the earliest version, has sounded its age in some transfers. Not here. Compare the opening with either its LP re-issue in the World Records boxed set SHB32 (one of the better transfers), its first CD appearance in The Beecham Collection on BEECHAM 3, or in the new Naxos 'Delius Orchestral Works Vol. 3' (8.110906), and one can hear that the SOMM engineer, Gary Moore, has achieved wonders in opening out the sound, giving space around the notes as it were to add a further dimension. The harp is crystal clear; the surface noise is minimal but nothing has been lost. The occasional scuffs and familiar 78 thuds betray wear in the pressings used but the sound has a brightness and a clarity that rivet the ear and give a real presence to the performance. The Naxos version is anyway *hors de combat* because, as a comparison of its opening bars with any other recording shows only too clearly, the pitch is higher than it should be and consequently its playing time a minute shorter. Delians have Beecham's 1928/9, 1946 and 1956/7 (stereo) versions (Dutton CDLX7028 and EMI CDM5 67552-2) to choose between. This first version moves forward with much more purpose, especially in the exposition of the theme itself, and in the beautiful pastoral section that Beecham draws it out more in the 1946 version, emphasising the three-against-four in the crotchet triplets, and adding a minute-and-a-half to the work's overall timing. His last version, that benefits from stereo sound, is almost as relaxed, making up in beauty for what it lacks in drive. But for the extra excitement it offers, no-one should be without the earliest version issued here which has a real sense of discovery about it. (Michael Gray's *Beecham:*

A Centenary Discography indicates that as many as 11 'takes' were made of the first side over three days. Early American pressings used the fifth 'take' while later ones used the tenth which would seem to be the one used in all the CD transfers.)

Like *Brigg Fair*, Beecham made three recordings of *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* (1927, 1946/8 and 1956, Dutton and EMI as above). There is little to choose between the two '78' versions. The middle version is slightly more refined while the earlier one if anything seems fresher with an ounce more character in the phrasing and playing. In *Delius as I knew him* Eric Fenby describes listening to this 1927 recording at Grez-sur-Loing in the presence of the composer: 'Sitting there opposite him in the quiet of that great room, with no fidgeting neighbours or disturbing faces to distract, one touched the very heart of Music in those exquisite opening bars. Never had the sound of the strings nor Goossens' oboe-playing seemed so magical !' he writes.

It is curious that Beecham made one recording only of *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* (apart from the complete *A Village Romeo and Juliet* set recorded in 1948) but, despite its age, it sounds well. It is beautifully paced, and played with both tenderness and passion. It is worth remembering that, besides countless performances of *The Walk*, Beecham staged the opera in 1910 and 1920 at Covent Garden, in 1934 at the Royal College of Music, and he conducted broadcasts at the BBC in 1932 and 1948.

The first of the rarities on this CD is the performance of *Sea Drift* with Dennis Noble as soloist. (Over a month earlier he had sung it with Beecham at the 1928 Leeds Festival, the performance to which Eric Fenby had failed to gain admittance: 'My dear boy, if I only had known I would have put you on the platform !' was Beecham's comment.) This had a private release on an American Beecham Society LP, WHS-107, but here it has been splendidly cleaned up, the sound brightened, and alternative 'takes' used to produce the most satisfactory whole. Dennis Noble proves a fine interpreter. His diction is superb and every word is audible. (Three years later he was to introduce *Belshazzar's Feast* at Leeds.) It is not known why Beecham did not approve this recording for release but it was quite likely a matter of balance: the opening favours the strings too much so that the individual woodwind lines are not clear, but it is a fine performance, making a worthy addition to the Beecham's three other versions (John Brownlee 1936, Gordon Clinton 1951 and Bruce Boyce in 1954). One wonders whether Delius had test pressings of Noble's version to play at Grez.

In 1946 Beecham staged the second of his great Delius Festivals, this time with his newly-formed Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. (Snatches from that Festival have survived on private acetates deposited in the National Sound Archive.) He took the opportunity to record in the studio a good number of works from the Festival (among them *The Song of the High Hills*, *Violin Concerto*, *Paa Vidderne*, *Songs of Sunset*), some before, some after the pubic performance. Two movements from *North Country Sketches* were recorded in October 1945 with the London Philharmonic Orchestra (with *The March of Spring* left incomplete). At the same

session he attempted the rather enigmatic *Dance Rhapsody No* 2, returning to it a year later with the RPO. In the end nothing from these sessions was approved for release, but in 1979 the second attempt at *Dance Rhapsody No 2* was issued in the World Records set SHB54 (and re-issued in 1998 on Dutton CDLX 7028). Now here for the first time we have that earlier LPO version of *Dance Rhapsody No 2*, together with the two movements from *North Country Sketches* and, recorded at the same time, *A Song before Sunrise* (which, after a further attempt with the RPO in December 1946, he finally captured to his satisfaction in April 1949 – issued on Dutton).

These unpublished 'takes' provide a fascinating glimpse into Beecham's work in the studio, how he moulded his interpretations, and the exacting standards he set himself (as if the 11 attempts at *Brigg Fair* were not evidence enough). He returned to *North Country Sketches* in February 1949 (the 78 set eventually being released on LP and later on CD – SONY SMK58934). The two readings of *Winter* start at a similar tempo, but this becomes more varied in the later version, bringing rather more atmosphere. Much the same happens with the two versions of *A Song before Sunrise*: they set off at a similar pace but in the later recording Beecham finds more time to explore the middle section before the reprise of the opening. At around five minutes' length (4'51" and 5'38" respectively) it was not a work that would fit easily onto a single 78 side, although Barbirolli had just managed it with his 1929 recording (re-issued on Dutton CDSJB1005). *Dance Rhapsody No 2*, a work that Beecham performed very infrequently, here sounds hurried, especially when compared against the more measured pace of his second attempt, but it is most interesting to be able to make the comparison of these two readings taken down a year apart, with neither of which he was ultimately sufficiently satisfied to release.

The last four tracks on this CD are in essence 'collectors' items' and probably of less interest to the general Delian (although one is nevertheless grateful for having them). But the two recordings that make this issue specially important are the freshly-minted *Brigg Fair* from 1929 and Dennis Noble's strong delivery of *Sea Drift*. With the 1934 Leeds Festival *Arabesque* and *Songs of Sunset* in the previous release in this series, SOMM is coming up with real treasures. What next ?

Stephen Lloyd

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM CONDUCTS DELIUS

A Mass of Life. Rosina Raisbeck (sop); Monica Sinclair (con); Charles Craig (ten); Bruce Boyce (bar); London Philharmonic Choir; Royal PO/ Sir Thomas Beecham. Sung in German. Introductory talk by Sir Thomas Beecham. Sony mono SMK2K89432 (two discs; 110 mins; ADD). From Columbia 33CX1078/9; Rec.1952-3.

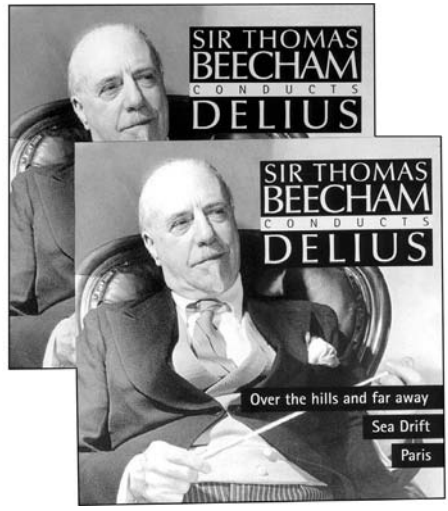
SIR THOMAS BEECHAM CONDUCTS DELIUS

Over the Hills and Far Away; *Sea Drift; Paris (The Song of a Great City). *Bruce Boyce (bar); *BBC Chorus; Royal PO/Sir Thomas Beecham. Sony mono SMK89430 (61 mins; ADD); From Columbia 33C1017 and Philips ABL3088; Rec.1950 & 1954-5.

At long last Beecham's *Mass of Life* is back in the catalogue, though the gratitude of Delians worldwide will be tempered by irritation at the excessive wait for it. Since the LP reissues on the Fontana label in the 60s and on CBS in the early 70s it has been totally and irrevocably lost to us, which is a fine way to treat a unique document whose place among the pantheon of truly great recordings of the last century was absolutely secure.

But that said, what a joy to hear it again, and in sound well beyond the scope of the LPs to provide. Only Beecham, who gave the first performance in 1909, really had the measure of this music and also the ability to convey its ecstatic pantheism white-hot to the listener. Time and again Delius's genius is revealed by a conductor who seems to be recreating the music, not merely interpreting it. Past performers under his baton have spoken in terms of 'a vast improvisation', 'the most living presentation of any music in my experience' and so on, and I believe the listener to these discs is likely to be affected in the same way.

A rigorous critical appraisal would have to admit that the soloists and chorus are not quite of a standard to do complete justice to the work. For a later (1972) recording EMI wanted to engage Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, (whom Beecham brought to England in 1951 to make his debut in this work and had wanted for his own recording), which was more on the right lines. Bruce Boyce, however, with the largest part, grows in stature as the work proceeds, and Monica Sinclair makes the most of her brief passages. Incidentally the voice of Sylvia Fisher, who deferred at some point during the recording to Rosina



Raisbeck, can still be heard in its early stages. The orchestral playing, needless to say, is fully worthy of the occasion, with the famous 'drenched' string tone which Beecham was able to achieve so effortlessly highlighting those moments when the performance seems to dispense with barlines and become an improvisation. The recording has its bumpy moments, suggesting tape deterioration, and the background is hardly silent.

But nothing can really detract from the magnificence of Beecham's achievement. Not even the dismaying realisation that the booklet contains the hopelessly unidiomatic old Bernhoff English translation of the text which perpetuates such laughable nonsenses as 'I am a temulent dulcet lyre' and 'Prepared to mine ego' can do that. But it is doubly ironic that it should appear here since it was Beecham himself who rejected the Bernhoff text at the time of his 1909 première and commissioned his own from William Wallace. Wallace's version graced the booklet of the original Columbia LP issue, together with an admirably sensitive note on the work by Eric Fenby. That too has gone, and colloquialisms such as 'Zarathustra snoozes' are not improvements.

Of the single disc little need be said. At first sight there might not seem much point to it, since admirers of Beecham's Delius will surely have acquired all three pieces when Sony issued them with different couplings in 1991 and 1994. However, the tapes have been revisited and their sound is more realistic than the often scrawny efforts we have put up with during the last decade. The documentation is better too – some of it was so bad before that The Delius Society entered a protest – and the 24-minute *Sea Drift* now has four index points against just one previously. The performances are, of course, entirely special, again full of those magical insights which in this music seemed to occur only to this conductor. Delians will not complain now if Sony produces a disc of this standard containing *Appalachia* and *In a Summer Garden,* the two remaining Beecham-Delius recordings from the LP era still not issued on CD.

Lyndon Jenkins

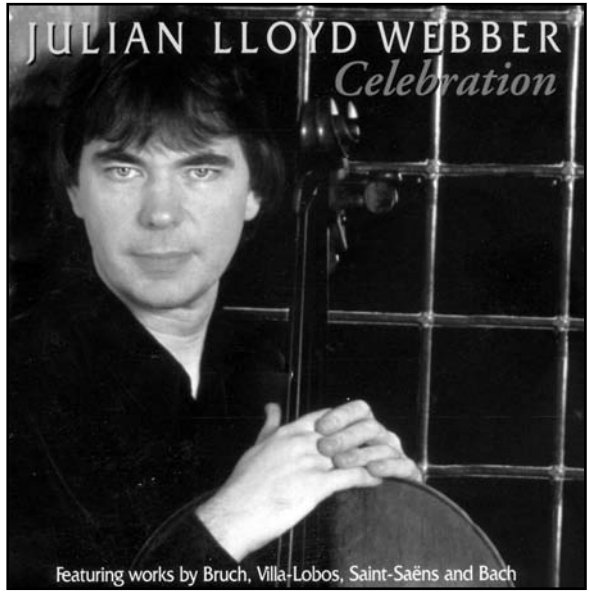
Postscript: This is a convenient place to report that a recording of one of his own performances of the music from *Irmelin,* which Beecham made into a concert suite for orchestra alone, has at last reached CD. *Scenes from Irmelin* (as the music was generally billed) first began to appear in Beecham concerts in 1953, in the wake of his staging of the opera at Oxford in May that year. All the music comes from Act 2, arranged into a continuous symphonic work lasting 16 minutes. Though Beecham conducted it frequently at concerts during his last decade, this is the only recording of a performance by him that we know about (it is possible there may be others). It comes 'live' from the Promenade Concert in the Royal Albert Hall, London on 16 September 1954 and, as played by the RPO, is all that one might expect. The sound is not especially good – not as good, ironically, as other extracts from the same concert included on the disc – but the Delius is in the nature of an unique document and should be accepted as such. [BBC Legends BBCL 4068-2] - L J

CELEBRATION: JULIAN LLOYD WEBBER

Delius: *Cello Concerto* and *Serenade From Hassan*, Holst: *Invocation*, Vaughan Williams: *Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes*, Rodrigo: *Concierto Como un Divertimento*, and works by Villa-Lobos, Lalo, Popper, Saint –Saëns, Fauré, de Falla, Bach, Bridge, Canteloube, Bruch. (two discs) BMG 74321 84112 2

This is Julian Lloyd Webber's year. To coincide with his 50th Birthday Concert, and the release of his biography, we also have the issue of this CD entitled *Celebration*.

For Delians the significance of this compilation is surely the inclusion of two major works by Frederick Delius; the *Cello Concerto* and the *Serenade* from *Hassan* as arranged by Eric Fenby. Both items were recorded in the early 1980s and have been reviewed in earlier Journals. The recording of the Concerto is with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by our Vice President, Vernon Handley. The *Serenade* from *Hassan* played on the cello is a true rarity, and this is the only recording at presently available. An added bonus is the inclusion in the insert booklet of the original sleeve notes made by Eric Fenby, which chronicle the history of the work and describe its structure.



It would almost be worth buying this edition for the two Delius tracks alone, but the variety of other works included make its purchase worthwhile. I expect the attraction for most non-Delians will be the inclusion of the concerto written specifically for, and dedicated to, the artist by the composer Joaquín Rodrigo. But, there is something on these discs for everyone, and we can hope that purchasers unaware of the two Delius works will discover and appreciate Julian Lloyd Webber's sympathetic and romantic interpretations of them.

Jane Armour-Chélu

CYRIL SCOTT: A BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHY

by Laurie J Sampsel. Greenwood Press 2000.
Bio-Bibliographies in Music, 79. 337pp. ISBN 0-313-29347-3. £59.95

Of all the members of the so-called Frankfurt Group, Cyril Scott (1879-1970) was the only one to be outside the Delius circle. Balfour Gardiner, Percy Grainger, Roger Quilter and Norman O'Neill were all close friends of Delius, a friendship that to some extent is reflected in their music. They were all frequent visitors to Grez. But not Cyril Scott. Delius will have had contact with all the Frankfurt Group in the early days of their acquaintance at the 'at homes' in Pembroke Villas, London, in either Norman and Adine O'Neill's house or Balfour Gardiner's that was almost opposite. But friendship with Scott did not develop.

Of the two surviving letters from Scott to Delius (see Lionel Carley, *Delius: A Life in Letters* Vol. 1), the first, in March 1907, merely concerns accommodation in Chelsea that Scott was recommending. In the other, on 23 November the same year, Scott expressed appreciation of *Appalachia* (which had been performed the previous day at Queen's Hall with Fritz Cassirer conducting) while at the same time rather boldly suggesting that the Piano Concerto (given a month earlier at the Proms) was 'not an adequate expression of yourself'. A difference in their outlook, personality and indeed in their music was already apparent when Scott wrote that 'my own productions may not be over sympathetic to you'.

Although Scott wrote two autobiographies and gained quite a reputation before the First War, he has remained but a name to many and his music has long fallen out of fashion. His short hypnotic piano piece *Lotus Land* might possibly come to mind. Scott was cautiously respected and admired by so eminent an authority as the late Sir Thomas Armstrong, who, until his death, was Adviser Emeritus to the Delius Trust. In 1962, when Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, Sir Thomas was active in the formation of the Cyril Scott Society and, in an interview with Michael Oliver as part of a BBC Radio 3 *Music Weekly* programme on the Frankfurt Group in October 1977, he offered this judgement on Scott: 'He was rather injudiciously praised at the start of his career. People said exaggerated things about his genius, but he was a bit of a genius. He was a marvellous example of the dedicated creative artist. Cyril Scott didn't care whether his music was performed or published; he would have liked to have had it performed, he would have liked to have it published, he was glad when it was performed. But he went on writing, knowing there was little chance of a symphony finding performance. He went on writing day after day. People who wrote about him before the First War regarded him as an international artist of very high rank. More than one study of Cyril Scott and his music made very big claims for him'. Asked if these claims were justified, he replied: 'Not fully, but I understand how the people made them, because the music, even if it has finally to be classed as a failure, had a certain fire

and intellectual vitality and vivacity about it, and was the expression of a very extraordinary temperament.'

Until now there has been no catalogue of Scott's works so this new bio-bibliography by Laurie Sampsel, music librarian at the University of Colorado, while not a full thorough-going catalogue, does provide the first complete list and is much to be welcomed. It begins with a short biographical chapter followed by a list of works, arranged alphabetically with brief details of date of composition, first performance, publication, whereabouts of MS, etc. There is a chronological listing of Scott's articles on music, and a similar list of his published non-musical writings that illustrates his varied other interests (poetry and writings on health cures, theosophy, etc.). Other sections include a list of articles about Scott by other writers (arranged alphabetically by author); an extensive discography of recordings, from piano rolls to CDs, arranged alphabetically by work; a list of reviews; a chronological grouping of compositions followed by a classified list; and an index.

Sampsel's thoroughness is most impressive. To the list of works one might add the magnificent *Celtic Fantasy* for solo harp of which Hugh Webb gave the world première at Sidonie Goossens' 100th birthday concert at the Wigmore Hall on 20 October 1999.

It is hoped that this excellent and well-bound bio-bibliography will excite the adventurous to investigate Scott's output, including the many works yet awaiting performance, among them two symphonies. At the very least it is an invaluable source that anyone wishing to learn more about the composer will have to consult. It is good to know that the composer's son, Desmond Scott, who lives in Canada, is now active in the promotion of his father's music.

Stephen Lloyd

A FIDDLER TELLS ALL

by Ralph Nicholson ARCM

ISBN 0-9539286-0-8, £10.00, Printed by The Taunton Printing Company
11 & 12 Belvedere Trading Estate Taunton, Somerset TA1 1BH

This collection of memoirs was published by the author and they give a very readable account of more than fifty years of professional music making. Born in 1907, his career was contemporary or overlapped many of the great names in English music of the first half of the twentieth century such as Elgar, Delius and Vaughan Williams. The book contains a number of interesting photographs of groups of persons and individuals who played a part in the author's life.

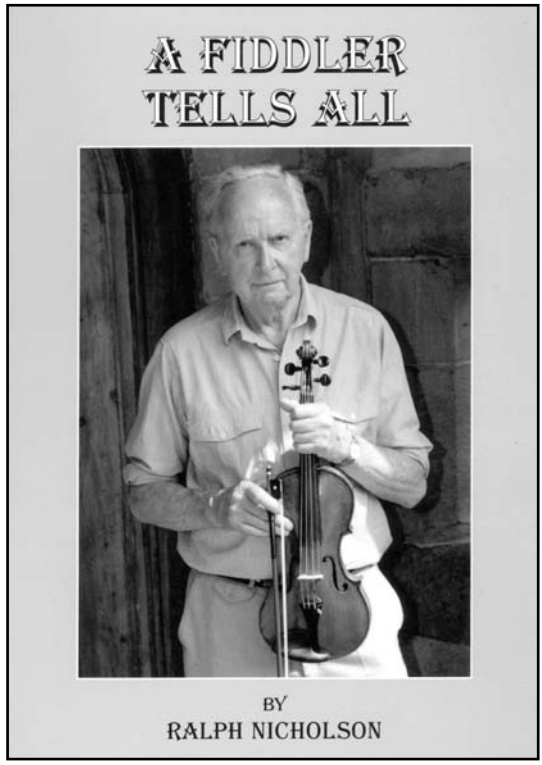
As a violin player in the Boyd Neel and Jacques Orchestras and later on in the London Symphony Orchestra he came into contact with many famous conductors and soloists. He gives many interesting and often amusing accounts and anecdotes from these personal encounters. The sections on Sargent, Beecham, Wood and Boult are of particular note and length.

When a student at the Royal College of Music, Ralph Nicholson sang in the choir under Beecham's direction in the 1929 Delius Festival, an event that left a lasting impression on him. Also under Beecham as leader of the college orchestra he played the solo violin part of the Dark Fiddler in several performances of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*.

He did much to encourage music making in the county of Surrey notably with the Croydon Youth Orchestra and later as conductor of the Guildford Symphony Orchestra a post that he occupied for thirty years.

Nicholson achieved some fame as an impersonator of Beecham and other eminent personages. This ability and many other events recounted throughout this book are a testimony to his great sense of fun and enjoyment of a long and successful career.

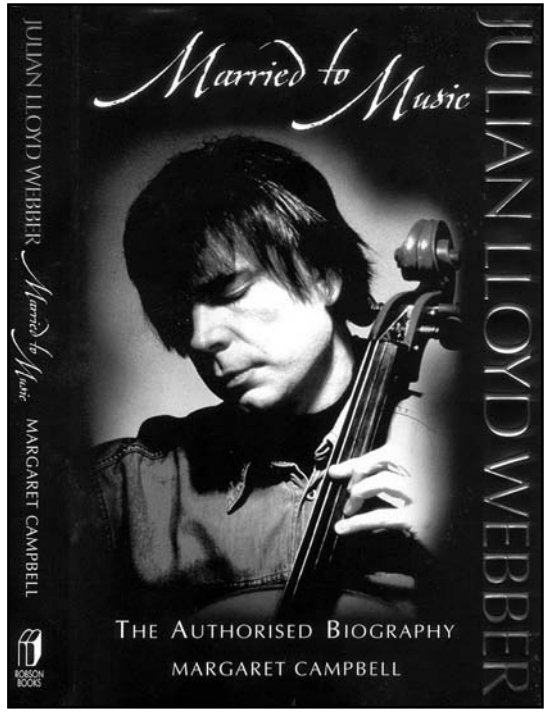
Ray Osborne



JULIAN LLOYD WEBBER: Married to Music

by Margaret Campbell

Robson Books, £16.95. ISBN: 1 86105 400 9



At 50, Julian Lloyd Webber enjoys an international reputation as one of Britain's leading cellists. This interesting book, written by Margaret Campbell with the artist's full co-operation, reveals the man behind the cello.

He grew up in a dysfunctional family. He and his brother Andrew were totally undisciplined; his mother was dedicated to her teaching and devoted to other talented musicians; and his father William, although a brilliant composer and academic, considered himself to be a failure and eventually became an alcoholic. Drawing on personal interviews with Julian, both of his ex-wives, and with his brother, the book reveals his obsession with the cello and drive to succeed. His relationship with Andrew understandably features quite extensively, and the effects of their often-competing careers is dealt with.

But, it is his championing of neglected English music – especially Delius – and his father's compositions that provide most interest. Delius's Cello Concerto was the work that Julian performed at his first Prom. He describes the work thus: 'this rapturous piece, with its abundance of beautiful melodies, and ravishing orchestral textures, is a luscious paradise garden of cello sound'. The recording of the Concerto with Vernon Handley and the Philharmonia, and not the Hallé as had been hoped, is one of many mentions of recording and performing Delius. His friendship with Eric Fenby is detailed, and he describes working with him as 'a truly awe-inspiring experience – almost uncannily like communicating with Delius himself some fifty years after his death'. Interestingly, writing about the visit to Spain to meet the composer Rodrigo, Julian remarks on the dependency of the composer on his wife - 'she would write down all the music just as Eric Fenby had for Delius'.

In the final chapter we read of Julian's counter-attack on the producers of the film *Hilary and Jackie*, about the portrayal of Jacqueline du Pré; his compositional tribute called *Jackie's Song*; and despair at the way classical music is marketed and portrayed today. However, writing specifically about the 'Proms in the Park', at which he performed, he comments positively that 'classical music *can* have a huge popular appeal presented just as it is'.

The book includes a full detailed discography of Julian's recordings, and additionally a discography, and list of works composed by his father, William Lloyd Webber.

Jane Armour-Chélu

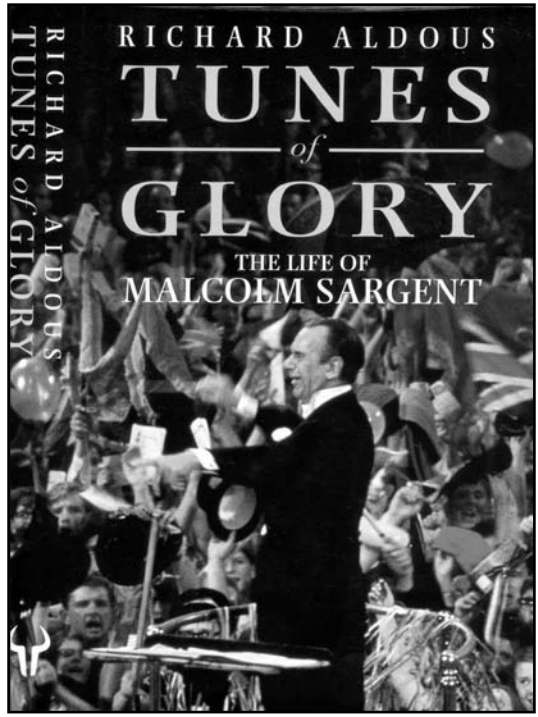
TUNES OF GLORY : The Life of Sir Malcolm Sargent

by Richard Aldous
Hutchinson, £18.99. ISBN 0 09 18031 1

When I reviewed Mark Amory's book on Lord Berners in *DSJ* 127 I regretted the fact that it had not been written by a musician. The present volume is a similar case; for the author's meagre personal description is that he 'teaches history at University College, Dublin'. (He also writes a review of his own book in a Sunday newspaper, which, depending on your point of view, is either a bit rich or extremely enterprising.) Unfortunately he differs from Amory by revealing his very obvious ignorance of music. Reference to Bax's *Nonet for String Quartet* not only shows unfamiliarity with music but also an insecure grasp of both elementary Latin and basic mathematics, neither of which we would expect from a History Professor. Later there is 'a violin concerto by Arthur Bliss' and 'the Society of Incorporated Musicians'. (Doesn't Hutchinson employ an editor or reader to sift out infelicities like these? Such a person might also have pointed out that 'Christopher Hassal' did not spell his name like that.)

It is perhaps inevitable that the biography of a conductor will draw comparisons with his contemporaries to their detriment. That does not, however, give the author *carte blanche* to belittle their work at every opportunity. Sir Henry Wood is alleged to have declared, on completing *My Life of Music,* "There! 352 pages and not a single mention of Beecham!" - a splendid way to handle the matter. By contrast the first reference to Beecham in the present volume states that he 'had been involved in many orchestral and operatic ventures by the late 1920s, most of which had ended in failure', that he 'was never comfortable as a choral conductor' and 'had to make humiliating cuts in contemporary works such as Delius's *Songs of Farewell*'. Beecham's famous quip, "I had no idea the Arabs were so musical" after Sargent's car was fired on in Jerusalem is described as a slight and 'scathing', making us wonder whether the author has any sense of humour. We

also read that Toscanini more than once attended a Sargent concert, praising him generously afterwards. Considering that the Italian *maestro* referred to Beecham as *Pagliaccio* this is puzzling - or are we to assume that he realised he had little to fear from Sargent and could therefore afford to patronise him, whereas Beecham was a different matter?



Without doubt the most extraordinary feature of this book is the author's assertion that the London Philharmonic Orchestra was *not* founded by Beecham as we had always imagined, but by Sargent, and for the purpose of playing at the Courtauld-Sargent Concerts of the 1930s. Beecham was only brought in at a late stage, it is alleged, firstly because he was part-owner of Covent Garden, where the concerts were held, and secondly at the insistence of"his lover, Emerald Cunard". Sargent, we are told,"deferentially took the title of Auxiliary Music Director". In such places the author gives himself away, for having done his best to portray Sargent as the superior conductor the reader rightly asks why it should have been necessary for him to defer at all.

Having been so critical, let me make it clear that the book is written in an extremely entertaining manner and is an easy read. Much is made of Sargent's love affairs with such celebrities as Diana Bowes-Lyon (niece of the Queen Mother), Princess Marina of Kent and most notably that with Edwina Mountbatten. She was responsible for moving him into Albert Hall Mansions, while her husband recommended his Knighthood for'war work'. One of Sargent's friends told the author,"Malcolm always had his hand up some girl's skirt". It is interesting to read of the conductor's battles with the BBC hierarchy which led to his ultimate dismissal, although attributing the troubles to'his famous withdrawal in 1952 from a studio recording of Schoenberg's *Five Orchestral Pieces'* would have carried more weight had the famous episode been described. It is also a surprise to learn how badly Sir Malcolm was paid - apparently he felt it demeaning to employ an agent - earning only 65 guineas per concert from the BBC in 1948 compared with l75gns for Beecham and l50gns for Barbirolli. (Why were these conductors paid so much more, one wonders?) No doubt The 'Beeb' felt it was

making amends by raising his fee after having sacked him!

Towards the end of the book the author is unable to resist taking another side-swipe at Beecham: 'During his long career, Beecham was intimately involved with Covent Garden, the BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, London Symphony and Philharmonia orchestras. He came close to destroying all of them.' Leaving aside the questionable accuracy, one can only wonder where he obtained his information and opinions. (It might be added that Boult emerges little better.)

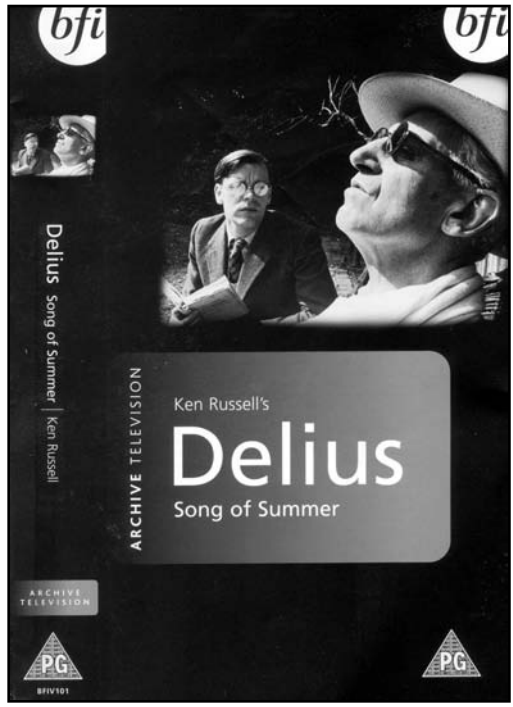
Despite the serious reservations expressed above, there is a human side to all this, for ultimately the picture painted is of a lonely man from a working-class background who was determined to better himself, firstly through the ruthless pursuit of his art - so ruthless that he finally worked himself to death - and secondly by making love to high-born women, often irrespective of their looks. The arrogance and self-admiration, so detested by orchestras that they played him up, must all be seen in this light. To those of this reviewer's generation he presented an ambivalent picture: we all referred to him as "Flash Harry" and said we knew what to expect of a Sargent performance, but that performance was well-considered and workman-like. I owe my first two live performances of *A Mass of Life* to him (and I shall always be grateful to Felix Aprahamian for taking me along as his guest). Delius-lovers may remind themselves of him through a relatively small number of recordings which, when compared to those subsequently made by some other conductors, are perhaps his greatest testament.

Christopher Redwood

VIDEO/DVD RELEASE

A SONG OF SUMMER

SPECIAL OFFER FOR MEMBERS



A Song of Summer has been described as perhaps the finest of a series of biographical films, made for the BBC in the early sixties, by Ken Russell. Many of you may remember that it was the second in the BBC Omnibus series in the Autumn of 1968; starring Max Adrian as Delius, Maureen Prior as Jelka and Christopher Gable, as the shy, intense and talented young amanuensis, Eric Fenby. For many members, and I am certainly one of them, it opened a new chapter in musical appreciation and whilst I had experienced a certain fascination with Delius's music from my school days, it marked a turning point for me. Sadly, this splendid film has been rarely repeated on BBC and in my six years as your Society Secretary, the most frequent question I have been asked is "how can I get hold of a copy?". I am therefore delighted to tell you that in agreement with Ken Russell and the BBC, this remarkable film was released on 20 August 2001 on VHS Video and DVD by the British Film Institute (BFI). It is only available in limited mail order from specialist outlets and will cost £12.99 + £1.50 P&P for the VHS Video and £19.99 + £1.50 for the DVD. The DVD is particularly good value, as it also includes the Director's Commentary and an on-screen biography.

Now, even better good news! Due to the helpful influence of our member from Cumbria, Derek Hook, I gained an introduction to the Sales Manager at BFI and have been able to negotiate a very advantageous offer for Delius Society members. We can now offer you the VHS Video for Just **£9 + P&P £1.50,** a saving of £4, the DVD for **£14.00 + P&P £1.50**, a saving of £6. Unfortunately, these products cannot be played in America, or Japan, due to system incompatibility. I should add that this chance depends on BFI continuing to sell to me at the present rates, so do not

delay. If you wish to take advantage of this offer, please send me your cheque made out to **The Delius Society No 2 Account** for **£10.50** for the Video, or **£15.50** for the DVD. Please allow 21 days for delivery. (Address below)

By the time you read this, all those members, who purchased copies of the video at Gloucester, from the pre-production batch, should have had them replaced free of charge by BFI. It was not until I got home that I discovered that some copies had a 'time clock' fault. Any member still holding a faulty video, that has not been replaced, is asked to call me as soon as possible on **01243-824964**.

Anthony Lindsey,
Honorary Secretary

1 The Pound,
Aldwick Village,
West Sussex,
PO21 3SR

PHILADELPHIANS CELEBRATE THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY AT THE COSMOPOLITAN CLUB

'O to be five and twenty in the towne and on the first night of spring!' That describes the mood of the fifty Philadelphians who gathered for the 25th Anniversary Tribute on 20 March 2001 for a gala evening of celebration, and thanks to Frederick Delius and friends, that is what we did.

Guests gathered at the handsome Art Deco Cosmopolitan Club downtown for a cocktail hour to meet and greet one another. One wonders if Sir Andrew Davis CBE, the guest of honour, had much strength left to conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra later that week after shaking all our hands, but he was his gracious self, resplendent in a scarlet carnation, as were Chairman Bill Marsh and the evening's musicians. Some out-of-towners included Ellen and Harold Diamond (the esteemed Editor of *The Delian*) and New Yorker Rolf Stang who could greet folks in several languages. Mezzo-soprano Nora Sirbaugh swept in on crutches nursing a broken leg, smiling nevertheless, with hubby Bob Holmes. Another special lady was Edith Kohn with an entourage of family and friends to help celebrate her birthday. Most Delius Society Board members were present as well.

Dinner was served in the upstairs dining room where all found their places enhanced by a lovely card picturing 'In a summer garden' – Delius's house in Grez-sur-Loing in the 1920s from a painting by Ray Osborne (courtesy of Brian and Josephine Radford). After thoughtful ascriptions of the Rev. Hubert Linn, we were served crème of spring vegetable soup followed by a choice of crab cakes or roast beef. Flagons of red and white wine were at each table, which encouraged animated conversations.

(left to right) Bill Marsh, Sir Andrew Davis CBE, Davyd Booth, Nancy Bean, Lloyd Smith, Enos Shupp, Phyllis Linn, Angelika Zbinden, Arthur Zbinden

Spirits were calmed by fresh fruit ices and coffee or tea. Bill Marsh offered special greetings and introduced Sir Andrew Davis whom we all toasted. In reply, Sir Andrew spoke enchantingly and then offered the toast to Fritz Delius and the 25th anniversary of the Society.

Following the meal, guests returned downstairs to the spacious Lounge with its elegant Art Deco Steinway concert grand, which had been made for the Cosmopolitan Club circa 1928. Following program comments by Board Member Arthur Zbinden, long-time member Enos Shupp rose to present Chairman Bill Marsh with an honorarium for his many years of selfless service to the Society and in recognition of the many seasons of planning and writing for *The Delian*, producing stellar concert and social events, and obtaining grants and gifts to further the cause of the music and circle of Frederick Delius.

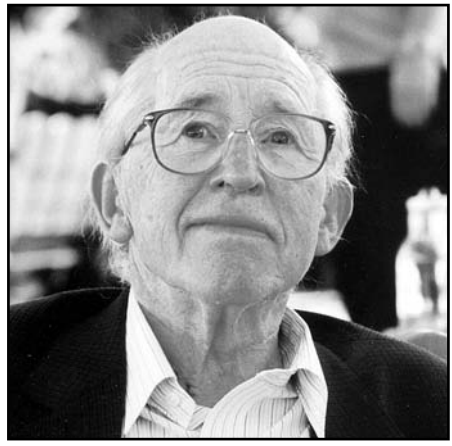
At this point a blue and gold floral arrangement was presented to Mrs Edith Kohn to honor this gracious lady, patron and Life Member of the Society. The Barnard Trio led us all in singing 'Happy Birthday'. The Trio comprises Philadelphia Orchestra members Davyd Booth (also our Vice Chairman), Nancy Bean, and Lloyd Smith. Emma Sponaugle of the Orchestra's PR department was the elegant page-turner. The Trio, like pearls on a string, played a dazzling selection of works ranging from Elgar, to Delius (both Romances: one for violin and piano, one for cello and piano, and the *Légende* for violin and piano), to Vaughan Williams, Bridge, and W.H. Squire. The concluding number, Kreisler's arrangement of *Farewell to Cucullain* turned out to be a lush setting of the *Londonderry Air*. Following that, Sir Andrew bounded up on the stage and joined Davyd Booth in the 4-hand version Percy Grainger's *Country Gardens* in a hilarious reading. Here was the Honorary Life Member of the Philadelphia Branch, the Vice President of the UK Delius Society, and the new Music Director of the Lyric Opera of Chicago thumping his feet in a reminder that he was at one time Organ Scholar at King's College, Cambridge.

After heartfelt farewells and thanks to all responsible for this stellar evening, we Philadelphians streamed into the quiet night air to hotels and homes, trains and cars, replete with good things and lovely sounds, looking forward again to hearing that elusive Cuckoo in Spring as well as many more fine seasons of The Delius Society.

Arthur Zbinden

OBITUARIES

Roland Gibson (28 February 1917 – 1 March 2001)



Idiosyncratic Societies consist of unusual people. Ours is no exception, and Roland Olof Gibson, the founder member, was typical. His father was from South Shields, his mother Swedish. Born in Cardiff Roland was an able mathematician achieving a first class honours degree in two years' study, on a part time basis. He went on to gain an MSc. and subsequently a PhD. After the war he became a college lecturer and from the early 1950s was at Brunel College (later to become Brunel University) until retirement.

In conversation he did not sound like a mathematician, still less a scientist. One might think he was a professional philosopher or perhaps a historian, or musical journalist. He was, as Roger Buckley described him in the last Journal, 'a man of great intellectual rigour, originality and humour'. His enjoyment of music was untroubled by the cutting edge of modern technology. As the Vicar of Eastcote said, in his address, 'it was some while before he abandoned his old Dansette and bought a music centre - he never got as far as buying CDs'. I remember an early talk by Roland to the Society where the musical illustrations had been recorded from LP to tape via a microphone.

Roland's style is well captured in the hand-written newsletters he began issuing in 1961, before the official Society newsletter started. Other typical illustrations from reports of talks given to the Society by Roland, were quoted by Lyndon Jenkins in his address at the Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service: 'On the piano, Dr.Gibson used a fragment of Grieg's 'Ballade' as an example of advanced chromaticism falling short of outright dissonance, and then followed on with a brief discussion of Schoenberg's theory of emancipating dissonances, the remoteness of overtones from the fundamental note in the harmonic series....'. On another occasion, 'In spite of references to spring or dawn, there is always in Delius's music that nostalgic autumnal evening glow. Now, the attempt to hold on to the past can induce a condition of decadence, as exemplified in the work of Aubrey Beardsley and Ernest Dowson, and also in the musical developments which led to Schönberg's 'Pierrot Lunaire' and, in the world of art, to phenomena such as dadaism'.

Legend is that Roland, while shaving one morning in 1961 heard on the radio

that Beecham had died and realised something special would be needed to keep the music of Delius alive. Hence the inspiration to start a Delius Society; but Roland told me later that the idea was earlier still.

The Delius Society met for the first time on 14 April l962, in the German YWCA, Lancaster Gate, London W2. Roland, who made it clear that he did not relish administration, had earlier roped in Alan Tabelin, Secretary of the Schubert Society, to be Secretary. Tabelin had issued a 'Delius Society of Great Britain' prospectus (single-sided sheet) and was preparing 'the first new Delius Society recital' when struck down by a heart attack, in December 1961. Roland then informed us, in newsletters, that he had unsuccessfully approached Felix Aprahamian to administer the Society and it was now probable that David Simmons, 'who knows everybody in the music world' would become Secretary.

The Meeting was first addressed by Robert Aickman, writer and founder of the Inland Waterways Association, who delivered a stirring keynote speech about English music and the importance of establishing a Delius Society, while disclaiming any intention to be involved in running it. After varied discussion a volunteer Committee was formed, with Roland agreeing to continue as convenor. Within a couple of months Roland was able to announce a coup – Eric Fenby, no less, had agreed to become the Society's President.

The Committee held its first meeting on 10 May, with the addition of David Simmons, not previously known to them. David naturally asked that his position be recognised in some way. It was agreed that David be appointed Chairman and Roland Vice-Chairman. Roland's modest way of thinking soon showed itself. As early as May 1962 he was writing to members, 'the very fact that I started a new Delius Society make me wonder whether it does not foreshadow a decline in my liking for Delius's music, possibly being an expression of a fear of losing something precious?' In 1967 he became a Vice President and left the Committee.

Readers should not come away with the impression that Roland had the inspiration to found a Society and then sit back doing little or nothing. The early prototype newsletters were a big effort; the correspondence and telephoning that followed must have been huge. Some of his choices of helpers to continue the task may not have been altogether happy, but we got there in the end. Whether there would have been a Delius Society, but for Roland, remains arguable. Enthusiasts might have continued for years standing around, chatting and saying what a good idea forming a Society would be, if only someone else would start it. Probably a Society would have emerged (as happened with Elgar, Bax, Warlock, Wagner and others) but not at so opportune a time.

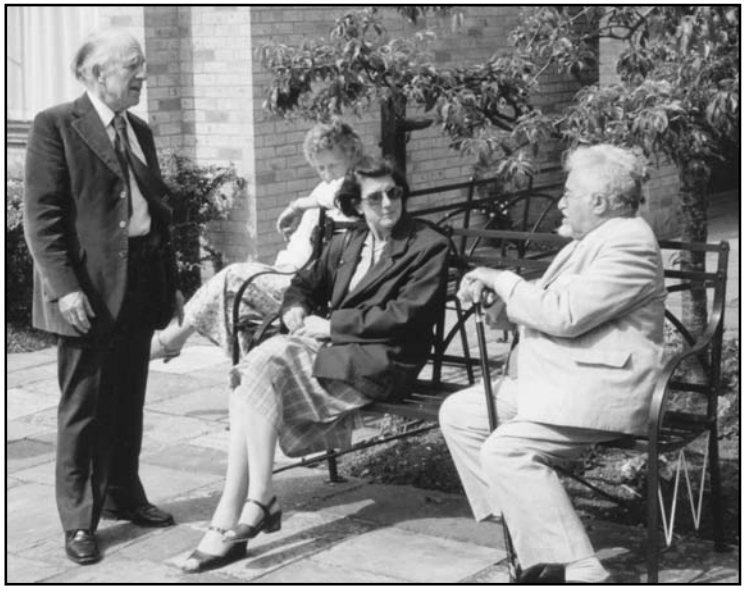
Although a background figure in running the Society, Roland continued a regular and genial presence at meetings. Always willing to address the Society, among a number of talks he delivered was the apparent oxymoron 'Delius and Brahms', which he carried off with aplomb. Midlands Branch members will recall the Saturday when Roland and I went as guests to their 10th anniversary dinner. Avid enjoyment of the early evening hospitality curtailed his active participation in

the formal events that followed.

In the Society's earlier years Roland's conversation hinted at a bachelor life-style close to bohemian. He might have felt at home in the company of Constant Lambert and Peter Warlock. I visited the well ordered Richmond flat once and remember that he played a recording of Paul Dukas's then very rare *La Péri*, which we both loved, and went on to expound Eric Satie's 'Socrate', of which I knew little. The move to Eastcote and in 1974 marriage to Jean stabilised his later years. They met on holiday in Wales and were a perfect match. In 1992 he fell victim to cancer and suffered a colostomy. Visiting him in Mount Vernon Hospital, I found Roland frail but cheerful. Yet he recovered and lived for another 9 active years, thanks largely to Jean. They enjoyed holidays in England and France and had planned another in Sweden for the third consecutive year, this summer. In the last month of his life he was preparing another philosophical book for publication, its title, 'The Impossibility of Not Believing in God'. His sudden death following an acute viral infection was a shock to us all.

A 'Remembering and Giving Thanks Service' was held at St.Lawrence's Church, Eastcote, on Thursday 15 March. This was well attended by relations and friends, many from afar, neighbours and parishioners. Delius recordings were played; before the Service *A Song of Summer* and *In a Summer Garden*, after the Service *A Late Lark* and *The Walk to the Paradise Garden*. They sounded heavenly.

Rodney Meadows



Roland and Jean with Felix Aprahamian in a typical 'discussion group' (1991)
Photograph: Brian Radford

Norah Barnaby (September 1899 – 2 April 2001)

Norah Barnaby in 1934

Norah Cameron Barnaby (née Barr-Adams) used several names. Her fascination for the music and personality of Delius came from her time with the *Liverpool Post & Echo* in the late 1920s. Female music critics were not acceptable at the time, so she wrote and took photographs under the name of Norman Cameron and, because of her close association with the music of Delius, she adopted the first name of Delia, among friends, instead of her given name of Norah that she detested.

Norah-Delia came from an established middle-class family in Cheshire. She had two younger brothers. Their father had his own business in Lancashire and there was no shortage of money. While at a private girls' school in Hertfordshire, her father agreed to her going up to Oxford if she passed her Matriculation. She did so, but then discovered that her parents had already arranged for her to go to a domestic science school in Edinburgh. She never forgave them and hated this part of her life, which came at the end of the First War when all they seemed to have to cook was powdered egg. She returned home a rebel, and insisted on pursuing her chosen career in journalism.

After many efforts to be accepted anywhere, she eventually found herself in a fairly menial job with *The Liverpool Post and Echo* but joined an artists' club in Liverpool where one of the principal members - and amateur actors - was David Webster (at the time a director of the local Bon Marché) who became a good friend. This gave her a 'hands-on' introduction to the arts and, thanks to support from the paper's music critic, A.K.Holland, she began to review concert and opera performances and to interview those musicians who were willing to talk. In this, she had astonishing success. Many of the great musicians appeared in Liverpool, who enabled her, by their excellence, to develop a keen sense of the difference between their performances and some others. She was sent to London by her paper as 'Norman Cameron', and covered the Delius Festival of 1929, watching the ailing composer being wheeled across the road from the Langham Hotel to Queen's Hall and then hearing him speak at the final performance. Although Delius was too frail for interview, Delia had a pleasant correspondence with Mrs Delius and, when he died at Grez-sur-Loing and was brought over here to be buried in Limpsfield, Delia was present at the funeral service and interment where

she took a rare, possibly the only, photograph of Beecham giving his address at the graveside.

Even before Delius's departure, a Delius Society was formed with the intention to record as much of his music as possible and its secretary was Miss Barr-Adams (or Mr Cameron). The Columbia Record Company agreed to record a series of Society albums although the recording producer, Walter Legge, heartily disliked the music and was eventually persuaded to leave the committee, especially as he had insisted upon writing the notes that were to go with each album. These were already being prepared by the Delius expert in Liverpool, A.K.Holland. Although Legge produced the 78s with all his famous skill, his pessimistic view of Delius's music with its lack of appeal to the public, was overturned by results when the records were rapturously received.

Norah at Limpsfield, Summer 1954

Sadly, Delius did not hear them. He should have received Volume I of the Society Edition by post, but it was held up by French customs who did not release it until after he had died. The stalwart and unyielding secretarial correspondence between 'Norman Cameron' and Walter Legge (existing in private hands) had done much to ensure the success of the venture, nor should her part in it be forgotten.

Her musical preferences and knowledge quickly widened. She had closely followed Beecham's season of Russian Ballet at the Lyceum Theatre in 1932, got to know the dancers and attended almost every performance. Then there was Rachmaninov. Although his agent told Delia that the Russian maestro never gave interviews, he allowed her to meet him after a piano recital in 1931 and evidently took to her, because she was welcome to see him at his hotel on every subsequent occasion when he was in Liverpool or London. She was a beautiful young woman in those days, as two paintings confirm, one of which was hung in the 1928 Paris Salon.

Her adventures through Wagner's operas, highlighted by a visit to the 1929 Munich Festival, made her a lifelong devotee both of Hans Knappertsbusch the conductor, and of Wilhelm Rode the bass baritone. She had heard Rode's only Covent Garden Wotan in 1928 and admired him so much that she went to the length of writing him a fan letter, in reply to which he sent her a large photograph of himself in the role, personally inscribed.

Norah was too young for the First War in the same way as Delia was too old for the Second, but she did duty as air raid warden in Liverpool while still working on

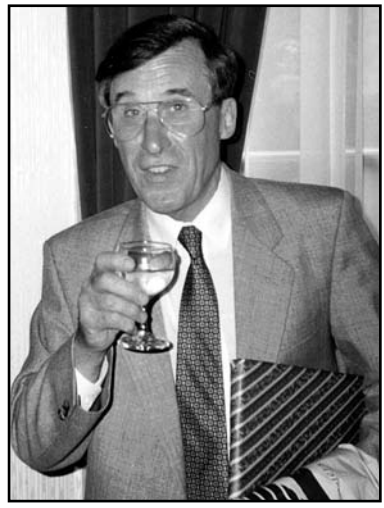
the *Post.* After the war she met the Music Adviser for Liverpool, 'Toby' Barnaby, who had been a classics master at Shrewsbury School. They combined forces and experience to organise musical conferences in Liverpool and set up a trust for music students. In 1948 they married and moved to Lincoln where 'Toby' was appointed County Music Adviser. Together they became directors of the Lincoln Rep and actively helped build it up until it attracted first class actors and actresses from London and the Midlands. In 1960 Mr & Mrs Barnaby accidentally found an old cottage in the Welsh countryside near Ruthin, high up and with a magnificent view across the valley towards Snowdonia. It was not immediately for sale but they returned to live there when it became available in 1965 and led an idyllic life with innumerable cats until 'Toby's' sudden death in 1970. Thereafter, Delia lived alone.

But she was not quite alone because she had the company of her cats as well as the birds, rabbits and squirrels that lived in the garden and saw to it that they were always well fed. Indoors, she was surrounded by musical memories; many LPs and audio tapes of symphonic music. Mahler was a great attraction - and videos of opera and ballet (and birds) were emphasised by photographs of her most admired musicians and friends: Delius, Rachmaninov, Rode, Beecham and Eva Turner.

On her l0lst birthday in September 2000, she had what seemed a mild fall in her bedroom, but it was serious enough for her to be rushed to hospital with a broken shoulder and leg, never to return home. She died on April 2 and was buried in her husband's grave at Llanfair D.C. four days later.

Alan Jefferson

Peter Trotman (26 December 1931 – 1 July 2001)



I first met Peter in the late fifties on a sailing trip on the Norfolk Broads, and after I commenced work in Nottingham I used to see him regularly at the Nottingham Music Club of which he was Programme Secretary for many years.

In his youth, Peter won a music scholarship to Oundle School where one of his contemporaries was the composer Hugh Wood. At the time, both were admirers of Vaughan Williams who was due to visit the school, and they decided to treat the composer to a performance of one of his works for two pianos. Peter was deputed to obtain the music form the Nottingham Library but was horrified to find that the music was out to another subscriber. He therefore, in desperation, rang the composer to see if he could help only to receive the gruff reply, "Well, you'll have to play something else".

Peter was one of the most regular visitors to the Midlands Branch of the Delius Society, and gave two memorable talks, one in 1966 on Ivor Gurney when his wife, Margaret sang illustrations of the songs, and in 1980 on the poet A.E.Housman. The Gurney talk was given many years before Michael Hurd wrote his book *The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney* (published in 1978), and before anybody other than specialists in English song had heard of the composer.

Peter also led the Midlands Branch Choir in several performances, one being a concert in which the choir performed Delius's Three Early Partsongs and another ambitious programme of excerpts from Rutland Boughton's *Bethlehem*.

Apart from the loss of a very old friend, I shall not find future meetings of our Branch quite the same again, and I am sure I speak for the other members who will have similar feelings.

Richard Kitching

THE NEED TO BUILD A DELIUS SOCIETY ARCHIVE

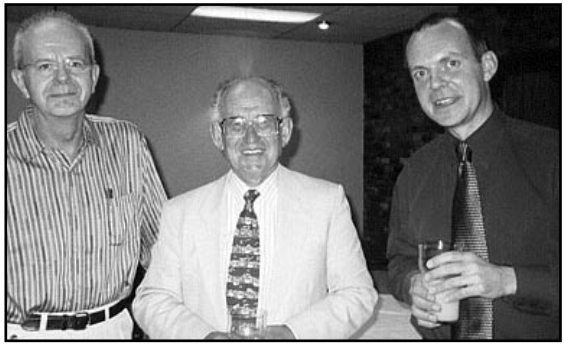
As we approach the Fortieth Anniversary of the foundation of the Society, the Committee is anxious the ensure that the various items of correspondence, early music programmes, scores, photographs and other documents associated with those early days are preserved for the future. You will see elsewhere in this *Journal*, details of our plans to commemorate the 40th Anniversary in July 2002. We hope to present at this event a visual display of early memorabilia and it will be just the starting point of our preservation plans. In consequence, Paul Guinery and I have been asked by the Committee to commence the task of gathering and sifting this historic material for future archiving.

I am therefore very grateful to Mr Norman Staveley of Hull who, having contacted me through the Delius Trust, has presented us with many items from his early correspondence with Eric Fenby, Edmund Kapp, Roland Gibson and others; many of the items pre-date the formation of the Society in 1962. I am also indebted to past Society Chairman and Honorary Vice President, Rodney Meadows, who is in the process of transferring to me all the early committee correspondence and 'Secretary's Newsletters', placed in his safekeeping by Estelle Palmley, prior to her untimely death in 1985. Mr Graham Slater of Cambridge has also recently donated his collection of Journals and memorabilia to the Society.

During the next few months I will be reviewing the Society's holding of *Newsletters* and *Journals,* for I know that there are many gaps. In *Newsletter 13,* to be published in January, I shall be writing to you to solicit your help in filling this void – so please do not throw anything out!

Meanwhile, if you think that you have anything of particular significance, that you would like to see preserved by the Society for the future, please do not hesitate to write to me (address at the front of this *Journal*).

Anthony Lindsey
Honorary Secretary



Roger Buckley, Anthony Lindsey and Paul Guimery at Gloucester 2001 AGM

Photograph: Ann Dixon

MEMORIES FROM THE ARCHIVE

Vice President Robert Threlfall recalls meeting 'Norman Cameron'….

In the mid-1930s, the last stop before the Queen's Hall was usually the ABC café at the corner of Regent Street and Mortimer Street. The density of its evening population was in direct ratio to the expected audience at Q.H., so on one night in early June 1935 the promise of a Toscanini concert meant that my first glance around the café revealed a sea of faces but apparently no spare seats. After a moment, a friendly face – that of Ernest Chapman, from Boosey & Hawkes – emerged, and added a welcoming gesture; and I saw him to be one of a group of three at a table for four. Joining them, I found the other two were Felix Aprahamian and 'Norman Cameron'. The latter showed us excellent photographs she had just taken at Delius's reburial at Limpsfield a week or so before, including a splendid one of Beecham speaking over the grave……

Editor's Note: I hope in future to include similar recollections of members, and also to reveal more about the work of Norah Barnaby (Norman Cameron) in the promotion of Delius's music.

'Delius near the Alhambra' – Graeme Koehne replies

In the last issue I told members that I had written to the Australian composer Graeme Koehne about his composition subtitled *Delius near the Alhambra*. I have recently had a letter from him. Mr Koehne writes: Please allow me to offer my profound apologies for the unconscionable length of time it has taken me to respond to your kind letter. I have been on special leave from my academic position for an extended period and your letter, which was sent to my university address, has followed me around the country only to arrive back in Adelaide months later. I am sorry for the delay this has caused in replying to you.

I am, of course, flattered by your interest in my music and honoured by the approach for more information for your distinguished society's journal. I have long been an admirer of Delius, indeed, when I first became passionate about "classical" music as a high school student in the 1970's the very first composer biography I read was Eric Fenby's book on Delius which left quite an impression on me as an aspiring young composer. Of course when I later commenced composition studies at Adelaide University the prevailing - seemingly unchallengeable - stylistic orthodoxy was the form of High Modernism associated with the French serialists, Boulez, Amy etc. It took me a number of years to "deprogram" myself from this philosophical and aesthetic ideology. (Actually, I must say I find it amazing that various forms of academic modernism still appear to hold sway in Europe's "official" musical circles - but then that's another story...) As part of my search for what I saw as a more relevant and communicative style of music I rejected the notion of atonality as the only way forward for music. Instead I sought out early twentieth century composers who I believed had found ways to refresh and broaden the tonal principle - in particular the French Impressionists and the - at that time - unfashionable composers such as Bax, Finzi, Vaughan Williams and of course Delius. The result of this study was I suppose a more accessible, lyrical style evidenced in works like the Nocturne you refer to in your letter. I have continued to explore tonality in highly varied ways and - as I believe "style" is merely musical "surface" and that what is important in composition is the musical material and its development - I have happily roamed a broad stylistic spectrum to the considerable displeasure of many hard-line critics and academics. Referring specifically to your question about the title *Nocturne 2 - Delius Near the Alhambra* I can explain that this piece was originally part of a larger chamber work for flute, clarinet, and string quartet inspired by poems of Frederico Garcia Lorca - my first commissioned work written in 1978. The review of this piece (one of my early attempts in a more lyrical style) by Fred Blanks in the *Sydney Morning Herald* was predictably dismissive and specifically referred to the middle movement as sounding a little like 'Delius near the Alhambra'. This comment was of course intended to be derogatory, however, as I had an (unfashionable) affection for the music of Delius I decided to take the comment as a compliment; when I later

orchestrated the piece for the ballet "Gallery" I decided to subtitle the piece "Delius near the Alhambra". I hope the above information is useful to you. Thank you very much for your interest in my music and your kind comments. May I wish you and the members of the Delius Society every success with your work in promoting the music of Delius.

(*Nocturne 2 – Delius near the Alhambra* can be found on the CD 'POWERHOUSE': Graeme Koehne – Adelaide Symphony Orchestra conducted by Janos Furst ABC 442 349-2)

Joseph Taylor recordings

David Hiley writes: Readers of Robert Matthew-Walker's fascinating article 'Brigg Fair' in the Spring 2001 *Journal* may have wondered, as I did, whether the recordings by Joseph Taylor of 'Brigg Fair' and other songs were still commercially available. The answer was kindly provided by Malcom Taylor of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, Librarian at Cecil Sharp House (Tel: 020 7485 2206 x18 Fax: 020 7284 0523, e-mail library@efdss.org). Mr. Taylor tells me that, "all of the Joseph Taylor recordings that you will want have again appeared on Topic Records. 'Brigg Fair' and 'Lord Bateman' appear on the sampler 'Hidden English' (TSCD 600), while a number of other songs appear in the Voice Of The People series (TSCD 651, 653, 656, 658, 668). These are all still available."

'Unto Brigg Fair' – not 'Under'

Robert Matthew-Walker has informed me that on at least one occasion in his article 'Brigg Fair' in *DSJ* 129, the song that originally inspired Delius's work was mistakenly referred to as 'Under Brigg Fair' rather than the correct *Unto Brigg Fair*. Apologies for any confusion that this may have caused.

Work by teenage Fenby

Scarborough member, Mike Lester has discovered a reference to what may be the earliest work composed by Eric Fenby. In the May 2001 old boys magazine for the former Scarborough High School for Boys, *Summer Times*, he found the following: **'**On Page 16 we mention that John McWhan has donated some useful memorabilia. One of these items was a Scarborough Municipal School Magazine, No. 39, Midsummer 1921. It contains an article about an Easter Concert: 'Where all did so well, it would be invidious to pick out individuals, but we cannot forbear to mention the Larghetto, composed by Eric Fenby (Form Ill) and ably rendered under the composer's baton by the newly formed Orchestra, which has proved itself such a valuable addition to our school organisations...'

Eric Fenby is also to be included in the next edition (2004) of the *New Dictionary of National Biography*. The entry for the book is being written by composer and writer Richard Stoker.

Paris in Hull

On 12 May the Hull Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by David Lloyd-Jones, gave a performance of *Paris* in Hull City Hall; the concert was supported by a grant from The Delius Trust. The programme commenced with Brahms's *Tragic Overture,* followed by Strauss's *Four Last Songs,* sung by Alison Pearce. The second half opened with *Paris* and concluded with Dvorák's Third Symphony. In his programme note, Norman Staveley, a Delius Society founder member, reflected on his emotive visit to Grez-sur-Loing as a student in 1951 and accompanied his article with two splendid black and white photographs he took of the Delius House and the River Loing.

Tudor and Beecham

Members who read my article 'A Forgotten Ballet' in the last edition, may be interested to hear that I have discovered that *Romeo and Juliet* (1943/44 in USA) was not the first occasion that Antony Tudor and Sir Thomas Beecham worked together. It seems that Tudor arranged the dances for the 1935 production of *Koanga* in England.

The London Select Choir

Tony Noakes writes: Ron Prentice (*DSJ* 128 p 86) quotes Ralph Nicholson as saying, "Who the London Select Choir were I've no idea". I can provide some information; others may know more. It was initially mainly for London-based Scots. The word 'select' apparently lacks for Scots any snobbish connotations. Its conductor was Arnold Fulton, who left for South Africa around the time of the war, when the choir lapsed.

It was frequently used by Beecham in the 20s and 30s, notably for the wonderful Delius Society recording of *Sea Drift* with John Brownlee. My parents, Ernest and Winifred Noakes, both sang for some years in this choir. They took part in the recording, and in a performance of *Sea Drift* a few months before I was born, so I encountered Delius 'in utero'. Later, hearing my mother's fine mezzo voice, accompanying herself in 'Twilight Fancies', together with her Delius 78 records, continued my agreeable indoctrination. She and I were at the Bradford Festival, and joined the Society at either the 1st or 2nd meeting; she remained an active member until her death in 1968. It was in the London Select Choir that she discovered Delius's music, and came to love it.

Paul Guinery, in the same issue, quotes Cole Porter on his 'polished, urbane and adult playwriting in the musical field', but claims that 'this is now defunct'. What, though of Sondheim, who, like Porter, is equally brilliant with words and music?

Delius's home in the 'Welsh border country'!

I wonder how many members have received a recent offer from Readers Digest to purchase a CD collection entitled 'Treasury of Great British Music'? My father who is not a great Delius fan showed me the leaflet, commenting that he had no idea that Delius had lived in the Welsh borders. And sure enough, there in print was the following comment '….and Delius's *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, capturing the essence of the Welsh border country he made his home.' Readers Digest claim that they have 'expertise and unrivalled resources', so how on earth did they make this mistake!

Scores at lower prices

Anyone who has been deterred by the cost from buying some of the weightier volumes of the Collected Edition, may be interested to know that Boosey & Hawkes have recently reviewed, and significantly reduced, some of their prices in that area. For example, the beautifully produced full score of the complete *Hassan* music (Volume 8, 212 pages) for £36.50 seems a reasonable figure, when one thinks of current prices of tickets for concerts, opera and ballet (let alone restaurants). Intending purchasers from outside London should contact the Publishers at 295 Regent Street, W1R 8JH (020 7580 2060) and place their order accordingly.

Delius performed in Norway

Terry Sanderson writes: Having just returned from a visit to Norway, I thought you might be interested to know that the Bergen Filharmoniske Orkester will be performing an interesting programme during its summer festival. On 14th June, in a concert entitled Grieg at the Proms, the programme will consist of: Grieg: *To Elegiske Melodier*, Grainger: *To a Nordic Princess*, Elgar: *Pomp and Circumstance March No 3*, Delius: *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, Delius: *The Walk to the Paradise Garden*, Tchaikovsky: *1812 Overture*.

The orchestra was the one that Grieg himself led, and the newly constructed concert hall is called the Grieg Hall. Pity I was there at the wrong time - I'd love to hear this!

An invitation for all members

Roy Price writes: Members may recall the recital I promoted in April 1990, at the Bede House, Higham Ferrers, of English, French and Russian music from which the old charity 'Music at Higham' (originally the brain-child, and run by the now General Director of the Canadian Opera Co., Toronto, Richard Bradshaw, before he left the UK), was resuscitated. We enjoyed nearly 10 years of annual concerts to aid a variety of charities. Names which come to mind of the artists who performed, without fee, are: Peter Donohoe, David Wilson-Johnson, David Owen Norris, Thea King, Ian and Jennifer Partridge, the Delmé String Quartet and the Schidlof String Quartet.

Delians from around the country loyally supported these, enabling the charity to donate thousands of pounds to other charities nominated by the artists. It was a thrill to organise such splendid events.

Next year, Saturday 20 April 2002 to be precise, I've decided to organise another event, again at the same venue, to mark a special occasion, and have engaged my old friends, Ian and Jennifer Partridge, to perform. The programme has yet to be finalised, but it will contain some Delius, English, French and other music, and I'd like to invite all Delians to come. Hospitality will be provided throughout the day, and no charge will be made, but I do want to mark the occasion by making a donation to a worthy cause and, as Ian is President of the Royal Society of Musicians, it seems most appropriate to support them? I hope you agree?

As the capacity of the Bede House is 120, I shall need to know as soon as possible just how many members to expect, but no later than 1 March 2002. Of course, other friends and my family will be present, so it'll be a case of first come, first served. Nothing will please me more than to see a goodly gathering of fellow Delians enjoying themselves next spring, so do try and come. Further details will be provided at a later date.

Members wishing to attend should contact Roy as soon as possible at: 17 William Steele Way, Higham Ferrers, NN1O 8LS. Tel: 01933 419885

Yorkshire Puddings, Whippets, Flat Caps, the Bronte sisters . . . and Delius

This autumn 12 students are beginning a degree course in Yorkshire Studies at the Scarborough campus of the University of Hull. Thanks to Mike Lester, who sent me a cutting from the *Scarborough Evening News*, we know that the music of Delius is included in the syllabus. A representative of the university denied the course was a 'Mickey Mouse' degree, which might be condemned as a waste of time. He is quoted as saying – 'the general theme will be to try to determine what is Yorkshire identity or whether such a thing exists, and the significance of symbols such as the white rose, the Yorkshire pudding and the Yorkshire accent'. What would FD have made of this!

Delius: Description by Osbert Sitwell

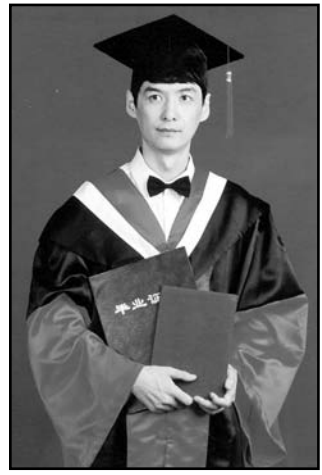
Richard Kitching seems to be finding references to Delius in all the books he has been reading recently! He found the following description of the composer in Osbert Sitwell's autobiography *Left Hand, Right Hand, Volume 3, 'Great Morning'* p 251:

'It was at 20 Cavendish Square that I first met Delius, and for him I cherished a feeling of the deepest respect, not only for his music, with its warm, melodious climate, but because he was the one Englishman I have ever met who knew personally the giants of the Post-Impressionist Movement, recognised them for what they were, and was privileged to frequent their studios. He used, for

example, regularly to attend the Sunday evening at-homes of the Douanier Rousseau, social occasions that now exhale a legendary quality unrivalled in the art history of a period comparatively near to us. Thus, Delius linked the present day to a fabulous past, and though then still in middle age was as solitary a survivor here as would be the last Blue Man in Tasmania . . . . I do not know that his looks precisely interpreted his nature. He was rather tall and thin, possessed a high narrow forehead, and aquiline nose, delicately cut, and a finely-drawn face, of the Roman intellectual type. Though it is true that his head showed every sign of distinction, he might, from his appearance, more easily have been a great lawyer than a great composer. In talking – and he was a voluble and delightful conversationalist – his tongue betrayed not an accent exactly, but a slight foreign stress and lilt, attractive, and personal enough to make a contrast with the theories and speculations of which his soliloquies were full; for he loved abstract ideas with the passion of a Latin for them – the English hate them – and, though he formulated them with all a clever Englishman's love of paradox, there was, nevertheless, a certain stringency pertaining to them. The most gifted of English composers living at that time, head and shoulders above his bumpy buttercup-and-daisy confrères, a musician of the world, he found himself somewhat of a stranger in London. Indeed, once again, without Sir Thomas Beecham's enthusiasms to support him, his music would have scarcely obtained a hearing in England. The later advocacy of Philip Heseltine, who served the cause of his music with unfaltering devotion, should also be mentioned.'

New 'Beijing Branch'?

Earlier this summer our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Stewart Winstanley received a request for joining information and subsequently an enthusiastic letter from Zheng Xiao-Bin of Beijing in the Peoples Republic of China.



Zheng is a medical doctor and Ph.D. Most of his post-doctoral time has been spent at Beijing Medical University working in immunology. Both his parents are medical professors and he also has a brother who is a doctor now working in Hawaii. (This is how he learned of us; from a BBC Music magazine forwarded to him by his brother). Zheng tells us he has been fond of classical music since he was very young and other composers he likes are Stravinsky and Debussy. His knowledge of the works of Delius is limited but he is keen to learn more.

In a country where on average, one month's salary is equal to our Society annual subscription, the Committee have decided that Zheng, being the only person in a country of 1.3 billion people to have enquired of membership, is unique

and that he should be afforded honorary membership. We look forward to hearing from Zheng in the future as to what, if any, Delius is performed in China and who knows, he may be just the person to start our Chinese Branch!!

'Guess the Composer' in Bavaria; and Delius in cartoon!

Peter Ratcliffe has written to let me know that whilst in Germany, he heard on Bavarian radio (Bayern 4 Klassik) several recordings of Delius, and one Sunday afternoon the composer was the subject of a 'guess the composer' quiz. Evidently listeners had to find the answer from three clues: his parents were German; he studied in Leipzig under Carl Reinicke; and wrote works based on 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Also Sprach Zarathustra'.

Peter also tells me that he recently spotted a house in Sri Lanka called 'Sea Drift'; and discovered a cartoon in the June edition of *The Cricketer* in which a man relaxing by his music centre is listening to a loud 'Owzat!' whilst holding a CD case of 'Delius – On Hearing the First Appeal of Spring'!

Delius in *France*

Friends of mine, who subscribe to the magazine *France*, have spotted letters in recent editions relating to Delius. It would seem the correspondence began with a mention of cricket and Delius in the autumn edition of 2000; followed by a letter in the March-April edition 2001 saying 'there should be no surprise that the composer Delius played cricket. His qualifications are impeccable having been born in Bradford and given the Christian name 'Fred". Fortunately, in the next edition of the magazine the theory was demolished by a Mr Holroyd of Cambridge, (not a member of the Society) who set the record straight and pointed out that the composer was christened Fritz, and also detailed briefly his life in France. Maybe we should be advertising the Society in a wider range of publications!

'Living With Pain'

Raymond Rogers writes: Delius's last years were touched on in 'Living With Pain', a BBC Radio 4 programme on Wednesday 29 August. He was mentioned as an artist who broke through chronic pain from time to time to compose inspired music. Eric Fenby's extraordinary help in this was acknowledged and a brief extract was played from *Songs of Farewell*.

Songs of Sunset – Discount for Society Members

Members of The Delius Society can obtain a 10% discount on tickets for the 6 November performance of *Songs of Sunset* by the Bach Choir at the Royal Festival Hall by telephoning 01223 365110 (Bach Choir Booking Office – credit cards accepted). Ticket prices are from £6 to £30. This discount will only be available until 26 October. Soloists are Stephen Roberts and Jean Rigby. Also on the

programme are Elgar's *Cello Concerto*, performed by Raphael Wallfisch, and *The Music Makers*.

Newsletter No 13 – January 2002

Please can members send all items to be considered for inclusion in the above to George Little, Newsletter Editor. The latest date for receipt of copy is 1 December 2001.

The Delius Society Journal No 131

The next edition of the *Journal* is due to be published in April 2002. The last date for receipt of copy will be 1 March.

STOP PRESS !

Miss Marjorie Dickinson, Secretary to the Delius Trust, has just been able to confirm the dates for the production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* to take place in Sardinia next year. They are 26, 28, 30 April, and 2, 3, 5 May. Further details in the next Journal.

THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DELIUS SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2002

The Delius Society was founded in early 1962, largely due to the initiative of the late Dr Roland Gibson, and to mark this 40th Anniversary, the Committee is planning to organise a formal lunch to be held at The Royal Air Force Officers Club, 128 Piccadilly, London on Saturday 20 July 2002. The AGM will be held in the afternoon and will be followed by a musical event (details yet to be arranged).

The theme of this celebration will be to commemorate the foundation of the Society, by remembering Roland Gibson's energy and foresight in creating a music society that has given us all so much pleasure over the years. Jean Gibson has graciously accepted our invitation to be guest of honour.

There will be an exhibition of correspondence, photographs, documents, programmes and other memorabilia, associated with the foundation of the Society. Paul Guinery, the Vice Chairman, has kindly agreed to be the project officer for this display. Should any member have any material they feel worthy of inclusion, please write with details to Anthony Lindsey (address at the front of this Journal).

In the interests of safeguarding your memorabilia, do not send anything (other than photo-copies) at this stage.

The Society will of course reimburse any photocopy/postage charges for any material selected.

Full details of the event, together with appropriate booking forms will arrive with *Newsletter 13* in January 2002.

Anthony Lindsey
Honorary Secretary

'One of our committee members has suggested that we have an annual dinner. Of course we mustn't forget Delius the epicure, though we must not interpret this too broadly, as, regarding certain aspects of Delius's life, accounts differ.'
Roland Gibson, Letter to Members, May 1962

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: Robert Matthew-Walker

I should like to add to the letters from Paul Chennell and Stephen Lloyd in *DSJ* 127 (Spring 2000) regarding Roy Price's comments on a scene in Alfred Hitchcock's 1942 film *Saboteur,* when a blind composer 'Philip Martin' refers to Delius's *Summer Night on the River*, playing an extract on the piano. The passage in question in Delius's score comprises the 16 bars between figures 1 and 3, although one bar is omitted (perhaps to synchronize with the conversation going on over it) and a wrong note (E instead of D in the treble) is played at the start of the fourth bar in this excerpt. The transcription is in the correct key, and is undoubtedly taken from Gerard Bunk's official transcription (then published by Oxford University Press) as some woodwind figuration in this passage was omitted by Bunk - as it is by the 'Philip Martin' character. Oddly, neither the role nor the actor who plays Martin are acknowledged in the film's credits. The actor who played 'Philip Martin' was in fact Vaughan Glazer, who is shown on the final credits as playing another (non-existent!) character in the film, a 'Mr Miller'. Donald Spotto's Hitchcock book (alluded to by Paul and Stephen) confuses yet another character in the film, 'Mr Freeman' (a Himmler look-alike fifth columnist), with the virtuous 'Philip Martin'.

Shooting on the film began in late 1941, when the USA was a noncombatant in World War II; by the time the movie was released, America had entered the conflict. The original film score, one of (I understand) over 400 that he wrote, is by Frank Skinner and was conducted by Charles Previn, André's uncle. Skinner's use of Delius's piece on the soundtrack would make a fascinating separate study. Hitchcock is credited with the story himself, but one of the three scriptwriters was the noted author Dorothy Parker, who was also a keen music-lover. By the end of 1940 she was in Los Angeles, working with Lillian Hellman on the screen adaptation of the latter's play *The Little Foxes.*

On 27/28 February 1941, Sir Thomas Beecham made his debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. His programmes included *Summer Night on the River,* which he had also conducted in San Francisco on 3/4 January. The American premiere of this work had taken place on 28 November 1915, given by the New York Symphony under Walter Damrosch. There seems little doubt that Dorothy Parker (and possibly also Hitchcock) attended Sir Thomas's Los Angeles concerts and consequently would have heard Delius's piece. It is surely the case that Beecham's Hollywood Bowl performances triggered the reference to the Delius work in *Saboteur,* for it is not unrealistic to imagine that the score so impressed Ms Parker or Hitchcock (or both) that it is referred to in the script on which they were then engaged.

There are three other odd musical references in *Saboteur.* In one scene, after Robert Cummings has hitched a ride to look for 'Mr Fry' (the actual saboteur), the truck-driver sings the opening of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (responding to Cummings's idle whistling of those four notes - the war-time 'Victory' signal) and

in another, when Cummings is driven by three neo-Nazis (including 'Mr Freeman') to New York, two of them sing the Frank Sinatra hit *Tonight We Love* - which is taken from Tchaikovsky's B flat minor Piano Concerto. Finally, when Priscilla Lane is held hostage in a room atop Rockefeller Center, her captor complains that he might not be able to take his kid sister to the Philharmonic concert that evening!

From: Paul Chennell

I was very interested in the piece in *Newsletter* No. 11, and the last *Delius Society Journal*, about Harry T. Moore and the Delius lovechild story. I have looked through Harry T. Moore's edition of D. H. Lawrence's letters, hoping to find some reference there to this story. I have had no luck with this search. Lawrence, as we know, knew Heseltine and Cecil Gray. I assume Lawrence heard this story from Heseltine, and that is why Moore has mentioned it in his biography of Lawrence. Since Harry T. Moore was an American academic it is possible that he had the information from Percy Grainger in the 1950s. I must say if Moore didn't give a reference for this story, it is rather suspicious.

Harry T. Moore's edition of D. H. Lawrence's letters does have some references, but not to Delius or Grainger. The only familiar names I found were Philip Heseltine and Cecil Gray. I can find no mention of Delius's child.

There is a good deal in Lawrence's letters about wanting to go to America to set up some kind of community. There was correspondence between Delius and Heseltine about this matter. Lawrence's letters suggest that he hardly knew anything of Delius and his life.

What fascinates me is what might be available in Alden Brooks's diaries which I believe are in the possession of Ms. Corinne Cornish, who lives in California. I seem to remember that Eric Fenby said of Brooks that he knew more about Delius than anyone else. In one of his talks Eric Fenby said that Brooks had told him things about Delius, which he would never divulge.

I have looked in some of the books on Percy Grainger, by Malcolm Gillies to see if there is any mention of Harry T. Moore, but could find none. Since Moore must have been researching D. H. Lawrence in the late 1950s I thought he might have contacted Grainger then.

From: George Little

Leslie Head's perceptive critique in *DSJ* 129 of the recording of *Paa Vidderne* with the RLPO conducted by Douglas Bostock, and Peter Hall as Narrator, summarises the parameters which should apply in a modern recording of this piece. The concerns are detailed in Grieg's letter to Delius (L. Carley: *Delius: A Life in Letters* Vol I, p 28). But Delius wrote *Paa Vidderne,* unaware that modern technology could solve all the problems of balance and performance. It does *not* however, solve the

problems of perform*ing*, and here the recording is a huge disappointment to me. Modern technology does not seem to have brought about a modern approach to the performance. Leslie Head refers to 'the Speaker' -The billing on the CD says, "Narrator Peter Hall" and this terminology seems to have conditioned the approach to Lionel Carley's excellent verse-translation of Ibsen's poem. After all, what does a Narrator do ? He narrates; and this is what Peter Hall does. How much better to have called him "the Storyteller" and then we might have had a chance of experiencing the incredible story of the protagonist's struggle, through privation and sacrifice, to achieve his personal and spiritual freedom. It is a passionate story, requiring all the vocal and emotional variety in the actor's repertoire. Instead, Hall adopts a 'poetry voice' and a sing-song approach - all 'trembly' and 'floaty' for romance; and when he wants to convey passion, especially sexual passion, he merely speaks louder, with the occasional harshly-toned syllable, ("I *took* her"). The presentation of the text has a uniformity which is monotonous and so becomes boring after a while; one simply stops listening. Each of the nine sections has the same "feel", so we have no sense of emotional progression - merely of "here we go again"; and there seems to have been no consideration of what feelings the performers are trying to evoke in the listener. The perfect example of this comes in Scene 8, with the lines 'It's only burning, your old house - with your cat and the Christmas pudding'. This is very funny indeed. But surely the emotion elicited should not be the laughter of bathos, but the realisation in sheer horror of what freedom costs. One's flesh should crawl. Nor, at certain points does it seem to have been decided *who* is telling the story - the actor, the music or a combination of the two. As an actor who has dubbed and revoiced many films, I have the feeling that the music was recorded first and that the voice was slotted in afterwards. I detect no rapport between actor and conductor *together,* controlling an orchestra and facilitating nuance and subtlety. This would explain why there is no integrated performance. Indeed, sometimes the words simply do not fit in with what the music is saying.

It gives me no satisfaction to say all this, but as a professional, I feel most strongly that an opportunity has been missed. *Paa Vidderne* is a unique and early example of Delius's genius. It should have had more thought and a much more overall concept both of the piece and how that concept should be realised, before being committed to disc. Delius, Ibsen - and indeed, Lionel Carley, deserve better than this. But I did enjoy the Symphonic Poem *On the Mountains* and the songs.

From: Tony Noakes

Arbiters of Taste – Some of us who greatly enjoyed the weekend event at Gloucester and the fine music at the Three Choirs Festival may have noticed the foreword to the Festival Programme, written by Martin Lee-Browne, Chairman of the Gloucester Event. He declares that seven British composers (Byrd, Tallis, Purcell, Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Britten and Walton) are 'unarguably world class'.

He then includes Delius as one of those in the 'second' or 'third' rank to whom he gives various commendations. Should we be surprised? After all, Delius is hardly a typical 'Three Choirs Composer', not withstanding the recent welcome increase in performances of his music at these festivals. (He is, of course, in another sense 'world class' – as a cosmopolitan rather than a primarily English composer.)

In another context, I recently queried an assertion that Britten was 'the greatest English composer since Vaughan Williams'. I suggested that Walton might reasonably be considered to be of equal importance – though this is, of course, a matter of opinion – a view that Mr Lee-Browne might share. My reason for raising this issue was that I have often (particularly overseas) seen Britten described as 'the greatest English composer since Elgar' (or even since Purcell), and this seems to be a widely accepted perception.

Some may say that such 'league tables' are of very little significance – that they essentially represent someone's personal opinion – and that such ideas change with times and fashions. I suggest that they are important, and that they influence which composers get their music taken seriously, performed, recorded and broadcast. The small amount of Delius's music broadcast in the UK and Australia, and performed at the Proms in recent years, is probably due to the views of the musical establishment, that he is, at best, in our 'second eleven'.

What can be done to remedy this? Would things have been different if Deryck Cooke's projected analytical study of Delius's music had materialised? Could any subsequent scholar or person of influence change the situation? What do members think?

From: Nicholas Berril

There must be others like me, with only limited musical ability, who have obtained a great deal of pleasure from the piano transcriptions of *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* and *Serenade* from *Hassan* in the series 'Twentieth Century Classics' by Boosey & Hawkes. I have often wondered if one of our members had a hand in these publications and if any others are available or might be published soon. A transcription of the Slow Movement from the Delius Piano Concerto would be a great delight.

Editors note: I sent Mr Berril's letter to Robert Threlfall for his comments, and here they are.

RT writes: There is a book of selections by Ronald Stevenson entitled *The Young Person's Delius*, published by Bardic Edition (for which I think the distributors are Music Sales Ltd). More difficult, but well worth a look, are the Five Piano Arrangements by Philip Heseltine and others, published by Thames (No. 978546 distributed by William Elkin). Of course, the only two reasonable easy solos by Delius himself are the *Mazurka* and *Waltz*, nos. 1 and 2 of his Five Piano Pieces.

If Mr Berril has, or can contact, a piano duet partner, there is a very good

4-hand arrangement of the ***Irmelin Prelude*** in the piano duet volume of Boosey's Twentieth Century Classics.

A suggestion, which might give pleasure, is to borrow a vocal score through the local library, say of *Songs of Sunset* or even *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, and browse through the piano part. This will often lead to some fascinating examples of FD's harmony, already probably discovered from recordings but even more striking when thus 'discovered' at the keyboard. Although these piano parts are often very complicated, such investigation will surely reveal a few memorable bars here and there which will respond to treatment!

DELIUS RADIO LISTINGS

FOR MARCH TO AUGUST 2001

March	Sunday 4, Radio 3 *Two Aquarelles* (arr Fenby) Bournemouth Sinfonietta conducted by Norman del Mar
	Tuesday 20, Radio 3 *A Song Before Sunrise* RPO conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent
	Sunday 25, Radio 3 *Sunset – Near the Plantation (Florida Suite)* Artists not listed
	Sunday 25, Radio 3 *Idyll: Once I Passed Through a Populous City* BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Andrew Davis Lisa Milne (soprano), Ashley Holland (baritone)
	Wednesday 28, Radio 3 *Intermezzo (Fennimore and Gerda)* arr Fenby Artists not listed
April	Sunday 15, Radio 3 *Intermezzo (Fennimore and Gerda)* Artists not listed
	Monday 16, Radio 3 *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin
	Wednesday 18, Radio 3 *Summer Night on the River* Artists not listed
	Monday 23, Radio 3 *In a Summer Garden* Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy

May	Wednesday 2, Radio 3 *Cello Concerto* Artists not listed
	Wednesday 2, Classic FM *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Andrew Davis
	Tuesday 8, Classic FM *A Mass of Life* Heather Harper (soprano), Helen Watts (contralto), Robert Tear (tenor), Benjamin Luxon (baritone), London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra conducted by Charles Groves
	Sunday 27, Radio 3 'Live' performance from National Early Music Centre, York *On Craig Dhu* BBC singers conducted by Bo Holten
	Monday 28, Radio 3 *Intermezzo (Fennimore and Gerda)* arr Fenby Artists not listed
June	Monday 11, Radio 3 *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* Welsh National Opera Orchestra conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras
	Monday 18, Radio 3 *The Walk to the Paradise Garden (A Village Romeo and Juliet)* BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Andrew Davis
July	Thursday 19, Radio 3 *Dance Rhapsody No 2* BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Titov
	Tuesday 24, Radio 3 *Brigg Fair* BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by Barry Wordsworth

August

Monday 13, Classic FM
'Evening Concert' – Music by Delius
On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring
RPO conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham
Florida Suite
English Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Boughton
On the Mountains
RLPO conducted by Douglas Bostock
North Country Sketches
Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra conducted by Richard Hickox
The Walk to the Paradise Garden (A Village Romeo and Juliet)
RPO conducted by Meredith Davies

Monday 27, Classic FM
The Walk to the Paradise Garden
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Andrew Constantine

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Editor is grateful to Miss Marjorie Dickinson, Secretary to the Delius Trust, for assistance in compiling the following listing. I would be grateful to hear from any member who knows of an event suitable for future inclusion in this column. (email: JaneArmourChelu@aol.com) Please note that some of the events have already taken place; they are included for the sake of establishing as complete a record as possible.

Saturday 12 May

City Hall, Hull
Paris, The Song of a Great City
Hull Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Lloyd-Jones

Saturday 23 June at 8.00 pm
St Olave's Church, York
On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring and *Summer Night on the River*
The Academy of St Olave's, Musical Director, John Hastie

Tuesday 17 July at 7.30 pm
St Marylebone Parish Church, London

On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring
The Wallace Ensemble conducted by Benjamin Wolf

Friday 17 August at 6.30 pm
National Concert Hall, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin
The Walk to the Paradise Garden
RTE Concert Orchestra conducted by Colman Pearce

Thursday 20 September at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London W1
'Balfour Gardiner – friend of Delius' - a talk by Stephen Lloyd

Saturday 29 September at 8.00 pm
The Pump Room, Bath
The Bath Recital Artists Trust
Sonata No 3 for violin and piano
Tom Pigott-Smith (violin)

Saturday 29 September at 7.30 pm
Wigmore Hall, London
Intermezzo from *Fennimore and Gerda*
The Nash Ensemble

Friday 19 October at 7.30 pm

St.George's Hall, Great George Street, Bristol.
Air & Dance
The European Union Chamber Orchestra

Friday 19 October at 8.00 pm
Carmel Presbyterian Church, 100 Edge Hill Road, Glenside, Philadelphia
Delius: *Four Old English Lyrics*
Edward Agate: *Five songs dedicated to Delius* (First published in 1911)
Janice Fiore (soprano), Martha Schrempel (piano)

Saturday 20 October at 6.30 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (MIDLANDS BRANCH) MEETING
'Ravensdale', 41 Bullhurst Lane, Weston Underwood, Derby
'Fifty years of iconoclasm' – a talk by Rodney Meadows

Sunday 21 October at 8.00 pm
The Pump Room, Bath
The Bath Recital Artists Trust
The Trelawn Quartet
String Quartet (1916)

Tuesday 23 October at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London W1
Paul Guinery presents more historic Delius material from the archive

Saturday 27 October at 7.30 pm
Heritage Centre, Macclesfield, Cheshire
Late Swallows
Northern Chamber Orchestra

Saturday 3 November at 7.30 pm
Wigmore Hall, London
Cello Sonata
The Nash Ensemble – Paul Watkins (cello)

Tuesday 6 November at 7.30 pm
Royal Festival Hall, London
Songs of Sunset
The Bach Choir, Conductor: David Hill, Soloists: Jean Rigby and Stephen Roberts

Saturday 10 November at 2.30 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (WEST OF ENGLAND) BRANCH MEETING
Archbishop Cranmer School, Cranmer Road, Taunton
'Historic Delius Archive Recordings' – a talk by Paul Guinery

Friday 16 November at 7.30 pm
Symphony Hall, Birmingham
The Walk to the Paradise Garden
Best of British Concert in aid of the CBSO Benevolent Fund
CBSO conducted by Sakari Oramo

Friday 16 November at 7.30 pm
The Theatre, Truro College
Truro 3 Arts
Three Preludes for Piano
Piano recital by Christopher Langdon

Thursday 22 November at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London W1
'Delius's songs: no longer neglected' – an exploration on disc by Vice President Lyndon Jenkins

Saturday 24 November at 6.30 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (MIDLANDS BRANCH) MEETING
'Ravensdale', 41 Bullhurst Lane, Weston Underwood, Derby
'Delius's opera *Margot La Rouge*' – a talk by Roger Buckley

Saturday 24 November at 7.30 pm
City Hall, Hull (Booking Office Tel: 01482 226655)
The Walk to the Paradise Garden
Hull Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Andrew Penny

2002

Saturday 19 January at 2.30 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (WEST OF ENGLAND) BRANCH MEETING
The Mill, Ash Priors, Taunton
'Norway – Following in some of Delius's Footsteps' a talk by Ron Prentice
Restricted space – please contact Ron if you wish to attend

Saturday 2 February at 2.00 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (PHILADELPHIA BRANCH) MEETING
'Delius Birthday Party'
Further details to be advised

Wednesday 6 February at 7.30 pm
Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir conducted by Vernon Handley
Dance Rhapsody No 1

Saturday 9 February at 2.30 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (WEST OF ENGLAND) BRANCH MEETING
Venue to be advised
Recital of music by Delius, Grieg and Elgar by Bridgid Kirkland-Wilson (violin) and Liz Hayley (piano)

Tuesday 12 February at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London W1
Robert Threlfall presents a second 'Delius Miscellany' – looking at some less familiar works

Saturday 16 February at 7.30 pm
The Playhouse, Epsom
Paris, Song of a Great City
Epsom Symphony Orchestra conducted by Darrell Davison

Saturday 23 February at 7.30 pm
Derby Cathedral
Sea Drift
Derby Bach Orchestra and Choir
Christopher Maltman (Baritone)

Friday 1 March
Delius Association of Florida
Friday Musicale (further details to follow)

Sunday 10 March at 6.00 pm
Beethovenhalle, Bonn
A Mass of Life
Köln Philharmonic Orchestra and Bonn Philharmonic Choir
Conductor: Thomas Neuhoff

Friday 15 March at 7.30 pm
The Theatre, Truro College
Brigg Fair
Truro 3 Arts
John Gough and Sally Bottomley (two pianos)

Saturday 16 March at 2.30 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (WEST OF ENGLAND) BRANCH MEETING
The Octagon, UWE, Bristol
'A Bitter Truth – Some English Composers and the Great War' – a talk by Peter Harris

Sunday 17 March
Castle Manor School, Eastern Avenue, Haverhill, Suffolk
Poem of Life and Love
Haverhill Sinfonia
Conductor: Kevin Hill

Thursday 21 March at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London W1
Felix Aprahamian, our President, reminisces about the many interesting people from the world of music whom he has met in his life

26, 28, 30 April and 2, 3, 5 May
Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Cagliari, Sardinia
A Village Romeo and Juliet
(further details to follow)

Thursday 25 April at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London W1
Programme to mark the 140th Anniversary of Delius's birth and the 40th Anniversary of the founding of The Delius Society

Sunday 5 May at 4.00 pm
Konzerhaus, Berlin
Cello Concerto
Berlin Symphoniker, conducted by Anthony Bramall. Soloist: Alexander Bailey

Thursday 9 May at 8.00 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (PHILADELPHIA BRANCH) MEETING
Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia
String Quartet programme
Further details to be advised

Friday 10 to Sunday 12 May
Delius Association of Florida: 42nd Annual Delius Festival
Friday: 4.00 pm: Opening events, 5-6.00 pm: Cocktail party at Delius House
Saturday: 11.00 am: Fenby Lecture, 2-5.00 pm: Visit to Solano Grove, 7.00 pm: Dinner Party
Sunday: 3.00 pm: Afternoon concert to include works by Delius
Further details to follow

Saturday 15 June 7.45 pm
Queen's Hall, Taunton
A Late Lark
Somerset County Orchestra conducted by Brian Cresswell. Soloist: Simon Hurrell

Saturday 20 July
THE DELIUS SOCIETY AGM AND SOCIAL GATHERING
40th Anniversary Celebration
The Royal Air Force Officers Club, 128 Piccadilly, London
Further details to follow

Please note that further details of Delius Society events (London only) may be obtained from Programme Secretary Brian Radford,
21 Cobthorne Drive, Allestree, Derby DE22 2SY (telephone: 01332 552019)

Details of Delius Society (Midland Branch) events may be obtained from Midlands Branch Chairman Richard Kitching,
Ravensdale, 41 Bullhurst Lane, Weston Underwood, Ashbourne, Derby DE6 4PA (telephone: 01335 360798)

Details of Delius Society (West of England Branch) events may be obtained from West of England Branch Chairman Ronald Prentice,
The Mill, Ash Priors, Taunton, Somerset, TA4 3NQ
(telephone: 01823 432734, email: ron@the-mill.dircon.co.uk)

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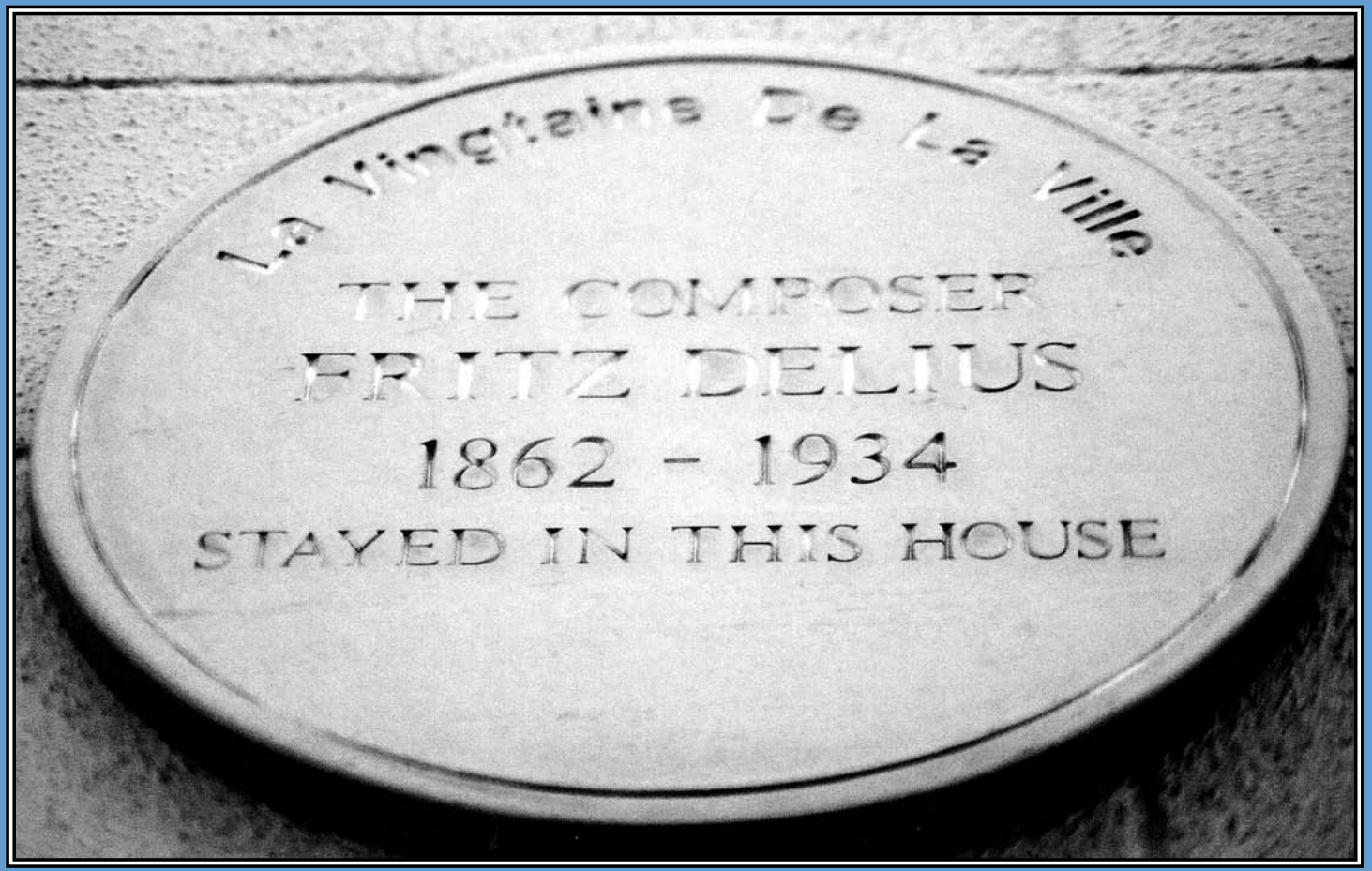

Plaque on Ceylon Villa, Havre de Pas, Jersey, Channel Islands