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The Journal of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society

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How to cite: Swaab, P. 'Sylvia Townsend Warner, Thomas Hardy and Music'. *The Journal of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society*, 2024(X), pp. 114–138 • DOI: https://doi.org/10.14324/STW.24.1.10.

Published: 31 December 2024

Peer review:

This article has been peer-reviewed through the journal's single-blind peer-review process, where the reviewers are anonymised during review.

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Sylvia Townsend Warner, Thomas Hardy and Music

Peter Swaab

Abstract

This article is mainly a documentary record of Sylvia Townsend Warner's interest in Thomas Hardy's writing, with a particular focus on its musical qualities and possibilities, as against a critical exploration of the role of music and song in the works of the two writers. It starts with a discussion of the three songs Warner composed from Hardy's poems when she was working as a composer in the later 1910s. The article presents a previously unpublished 1919 letter from Warner to Hardy thanking him for permission to publish her settings, and gives a context for this plan in relation to her other musical compositions of this period, reproducing some of Warner's manuscript music. It goes on to describe some performances of the Hardy songs, and includes comments on these from Dr Richard Hall, who edited them for performance. The article ends by briefly citing and discussing Warner's later remarks on Hardy's works, especially in the context of Britten's song cycle *Winter Words* and Evelyn Hardy's 1954 critical biography.

Keywords Sylvia Townsend Warner; Thomas Hardy; music; song settings; folksong; Benjamin Britten; *Winter Words*; *The Dynasts*.

This article is a mainly documentary account of Sylvia Townsend Warner's creative and critical interest in Thomas Hardy's writing, starting with the group of three songs she set from Hardy's poems in the late 1910s. It continues by compassing her fugitive critical remarks on Hardy, with a particular focus on the musical qualities and possibilities of his works – but stopping short of a developed exploration of the role of music and song in the oeuvres of the two writers.

The first record we have of contact between Warner and Hardy is in the context of music. Warner was still a Londoner and an aspiring composer when in 1919 she wrote to Hardy asking for his permission to publish song settings she had made from three of his poems. She planned to group these under the title 'Children of the Earth'.[1] Hardy's secretary wrote back to Warner in late October 1919:

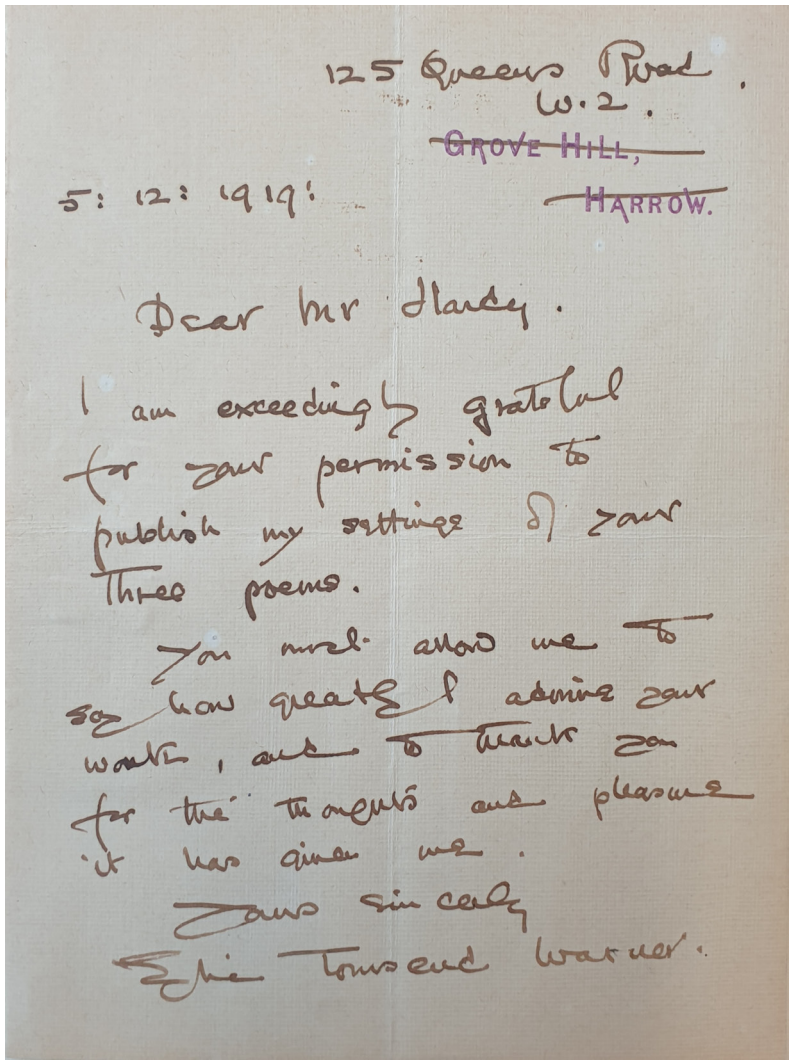
> Dear Madam,
>
> I write for Mr Hardy to inform you that you have permission to publish the settings to music you have made of three of his poems entitled 'The Pine Planters', 'She At His Funeral' and 'The Subalterns'.
>
> Yours very truly [unsigned][2]

Warner replied on 5 December (Figure 1):

> 125 Queens Road, W.2
> 5:12:1919:
>
> Dear Mr Hardy,
>
> I am exceedingly grateful for your permission to publish my settings of your three poems.
>
> You must allow me to say how greatly I admire your work, and to thank you for the thoughts and pleasure it has given me.
>
> Yours sincerely
> Sylvia Townsend Warner[3]

Hardy received many fan letters, but few can have been so shapely and focused as this one, with its felicitous distinction between the plural 'thoughts' and the singular 'pleasure' that his writing has given her.

The late 1910s were the years when Warner was studying most seriously to be a composer, alongside her position since 1917 as one of the editors of the Carnegie Trust edition of *Tudor Church Music*. Hardy's were not the only words that she set to music in this period. In 1917 she entered a piece titled 'Folk Tunes for Viola and Orchestra' to the 'Choral Works' category of the inaugural Carnegie Trust Music Publication Competition. She wasn't among the winners and we don't know for sure


125 Queens Road.
W.2.
~~GROVE HILL,~~
~~HARROW.~~

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I am exceedingly grateful for your permission to publish my settings of your Three poems.

You must allow me to say how greatly I admire your work, and to thank you for the thought and pleasure it has given me.

Yours sincerely
Sylvia Townsend Warner.

Figure 1. Letter from Warner to Hardy (Source: Reproduced with permission of the Dorset History Centre; DHC reference D/TWA/WG/15).

which folk tunes she set. But the Warner and Ackland Archive holds Warner's manuscript music for one such folk tune, a very well-known piece with many variant versions. It was sometimes titled 'The Lark in the Morning' or alternatively 'The Pretty Ploughboy'.

> As I was a-walking one morning in the spring
> I met a pretty damsel, so sweetly she did sing.
> And as we were a-walking these words she did say:
> 'There's no life like the ploughboy's all in the month of May'.
>
> The lark in the morn she will rise up from her nest
> And mount up in the air with a dew all on her breast,
> And like the pretty ploughboy she will whistle and will sing
> And at night she will return to her own nest back again.

One of many versions of the song appeared in Frank Kidson's *Traditional Tunes* (1891).[4] Warner may have encountered it there or in the wider context of the English folk revival prompted in these years, especially by Cecil Sharp and by Vaughan Williams, who also set it to music in 1904. The folksy celebration of lads and lasses urged on by the spirit of springtime is much in contrast to the darker notes in most of Warner's other settings. Walt Whitman's poems 'A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Grey and Grim' and 'Memories of President Lincoln' ('When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd') were the texts for her 'Memorial – Rhapsody for Solo Voice and String Quartet 1918–1920'. One of the few pieces of Warner's music to survive, the 'Memorial' comprises 30 manuscript pages and is now part of the Warner and Ackland Archive at the Dorset History Centre. Another work to be found there is 'Dum Transisset Sabbatum',[5] a Latin setting for six voices of the first two verses of chapter 16 of the Gospel of Mark – a text that had been famously set to music by John Taverner and would later be included (in two versions) in the third volume of *Tudor Church Music* (Figure 2):[6]

> 1. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.
> 2. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. (Mark 16: 1–2; King James version)

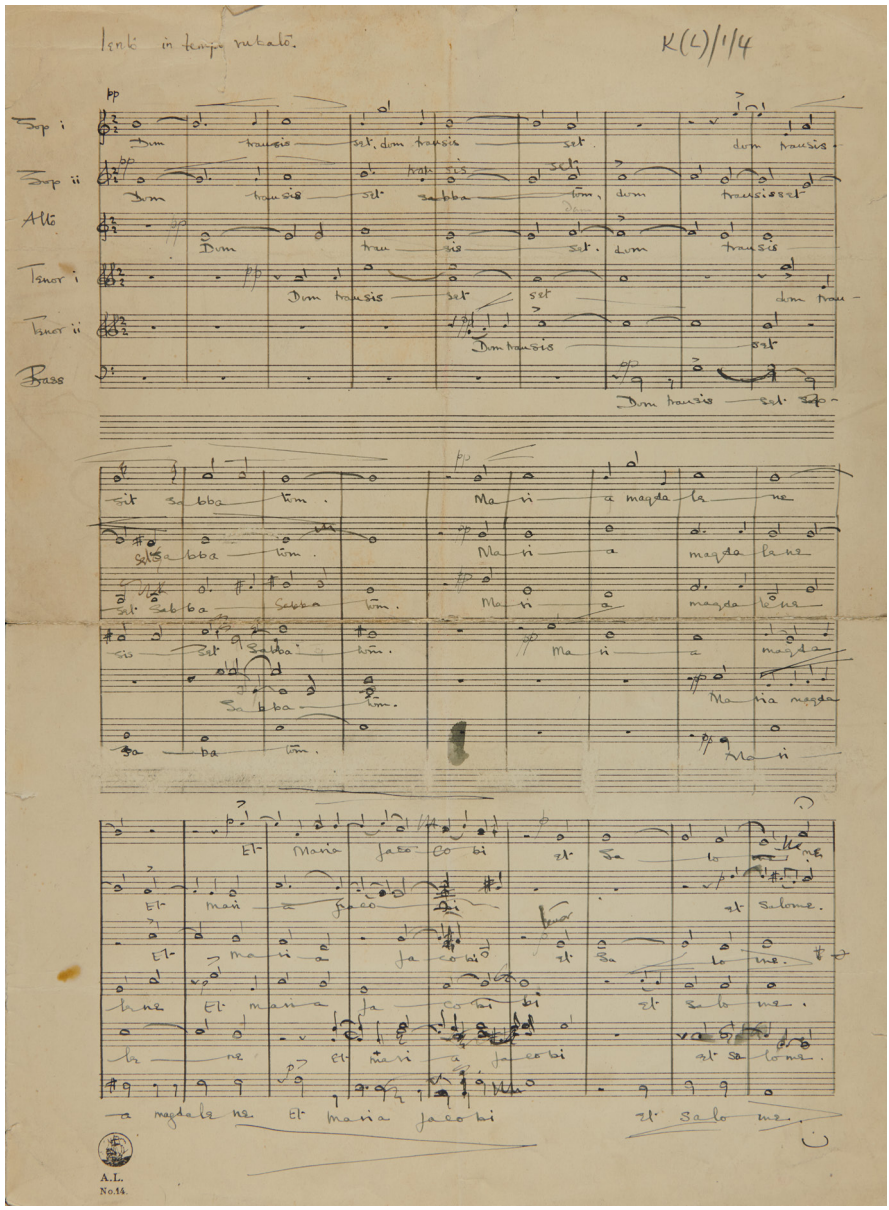


Figure 2. Page from Warner's score of 'Dum Transisset Sabbatum' (Source: Reproduced with permission of the Dorset History Centre; DHC reference D/TWA/A12).

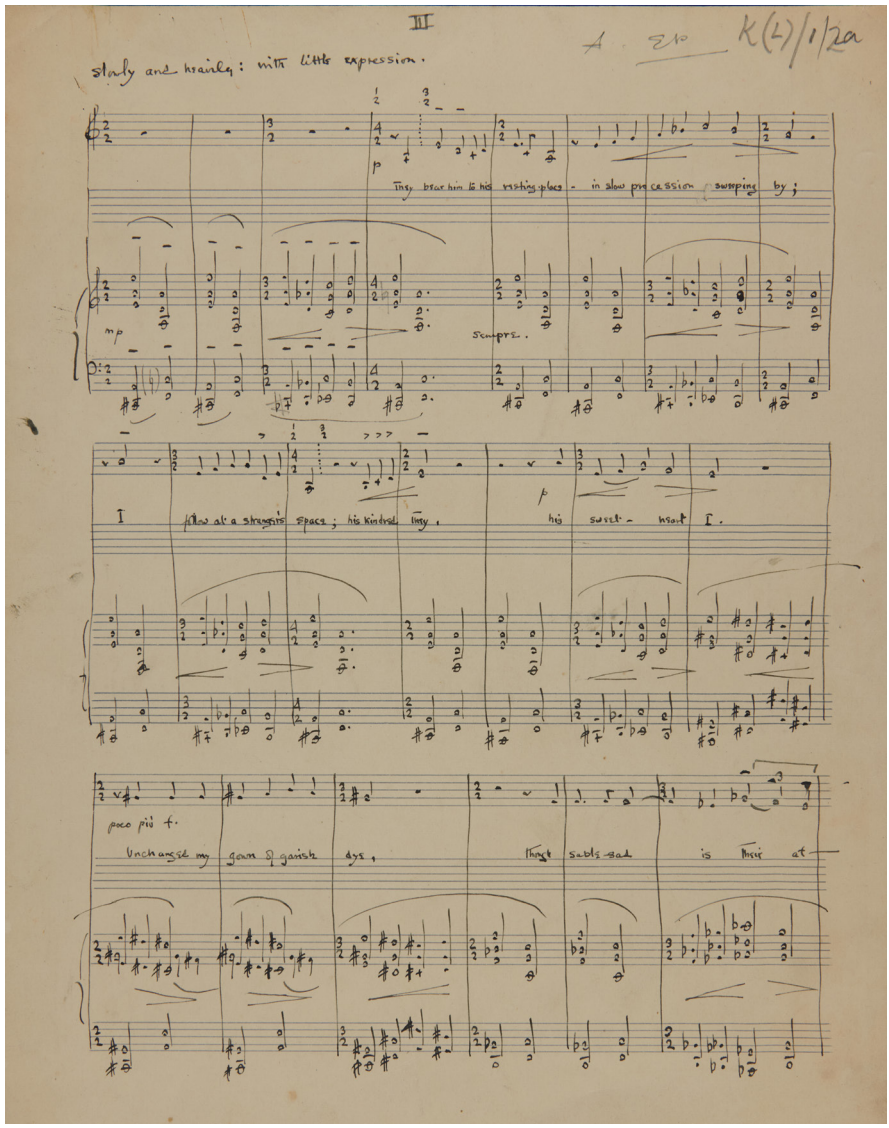


Figure 3. Page from Warner's score of 'She At His Funeral' (Source: Reproduced with permission of the Dorset History Centre; DHC reference D/TWA/A12).

The three Hardy poems come from different volumes and were presumably brought together by Warner herself as a group, with a Hardyesque note of planetary pathos in her title 'Children of the Earth'. The Warner and Ackland Archive holds the manuscript music for only two of the poems, 'She At His Funeral' and 'The Subalterns', probably because Warner later decided on quality grounds that these were the only two she wanted to preserve (Figure 3).

The music sheets for 'She At His Funeral' and 'The Subalterns' are headed 'III' and 'IV', suggesting that 'I' and 'II' were probably the two parts of 'The Pine Planters'. The text of the poems follows below.

The Pine Planters

(Marty South's Reverie)

We work here together
In blast and breeze;
He fills the earth in,
I hold the trees.

He does not notice
That what I do
Keeps me from moving
And chills me through.

He has seen one fairer
I feel by his eye,
Which skims me as though
I were not by.

And since she passed here
He scarce has known
But that the woodland
Holds him alone.

I have worked here with him
Since morning shine,
He busy with his thoughts
And I with mine.

I have helped him so many,
So many days,
But never win any
Small word of praise!

Shall I not sigh to him
That I work on
Glad to be nigh to him
Though hope is gone?

Nay, though he never
Knew love like mine,
I'll bear it ever
And make no sign!

II

From the bundle at hand here
I take each tree,
And set it to stand, here
Always to be;
When, in a second,
As if from fear
Of Life unreckoned
Beginning here,
It starts a sighing
Through day and night,
Though while there lying
'Twas voiceless quite.

It will sigh in the morning,
Will sigh at noon,
At the winter's warning,
In wafts of June;
Grieving that never
Kind Fate decreed
It should for ever
Remain a seed,
And shun the welter
Of things without,
Unneeding shelter
From storm and drought.

Thus, all unknowing
For whom or what
We set it growing
In this bleak spot,
It still will grieve here
Throughout its time,
Unable to leave here,
Or change its clime;
Or tell the story
Of us to-day
When, halt and hoary,
We pass away.

She At His Funeral

They bear him to his resting-place –
In slow procession sweeping by;
I follow at a stranger's space;
His kindred they, his sweetheart I.
Unchanged my gown of garish dye,
Though sable-sad is their attire;
But they stand round with griefless eye,
Whilst my regret consumes like fire!

The Subalterns

I

'Poor wanderer,' said the leaden sky,
'I fain would lighten thee,
But there are laws in force on high
Which say it must not be.'

II

– 'I would not freeze thee, shorn one,' cried
The North, 'knew I but how
To warm my breath, to slack my stride;
But I am ruled as thou.'

III

– 'To-morrow I attack thee, wight,'
Said Sickness. 'Yet I swear
I bear thy little ark no spite,
But am bid enter there.'

IV

– 'Come hither, Son,' I heard Death say;
'I did not will a grave
Should end thy pilgrimage to-day,
But I, too, am a slave!'

V

We smiled upon each other then,
And life to me had less
Of that fell look it wore ere when
They owned their passiveness. [7]

We can only speculate about Warner's choice of poems, but it is interesting to do so, especially as we know relatively little about this period of her life. The sequence of Hardy's poems groups different kinds of human wretchedness under its title 'Children of the Earth'. The speakers in the first two are women, radically alone, and the source of their sorrow is unrequited or bereft love. 'The Pine Planters', written in 1909 and subtitled 'Marty South's Reverie', alludes to Hardy's novel *The Woodlanders* (1888). The speaker is the faithful Marty, whom Warner would later call 'one of his best-imagined women'.[8] She voices (to us but not to him) her painful yearning for Giles Winterborne, with whom she is planting pine trees while all the time he remains unaware of her feelings. The second section of the poem is grounded on a pathetic fallacy evoking life itself as grievous for the newly planted pine trees, whose future will be unsheltered, immobile and inarticulate. The voice of lament has a more explicit social dimension in 'She At His Funeral'; the gap between the family's 'sable-sad' forms of grief and the speaker's 'garishly' dressed truth of feeling points towards Hardy's bitter and satirical stories of social convention at odds with true love. But the minimal situational details in the poem perhaps diffuse blame into

mystery and leave at its centre the raw fact of loss. 'The Subalterns' has a very different setting, and here the human protagonists are male ones. Four of the five stanzas are spoken by the grievous earthly powers of sickness, death and the elements, but these are themselves helplessly subject to the laws of the world. The speaker of the final stanza finds some consolation in the idea that such afflictions are impersonal and inevitable. Readers may be prompted to take a different view of the

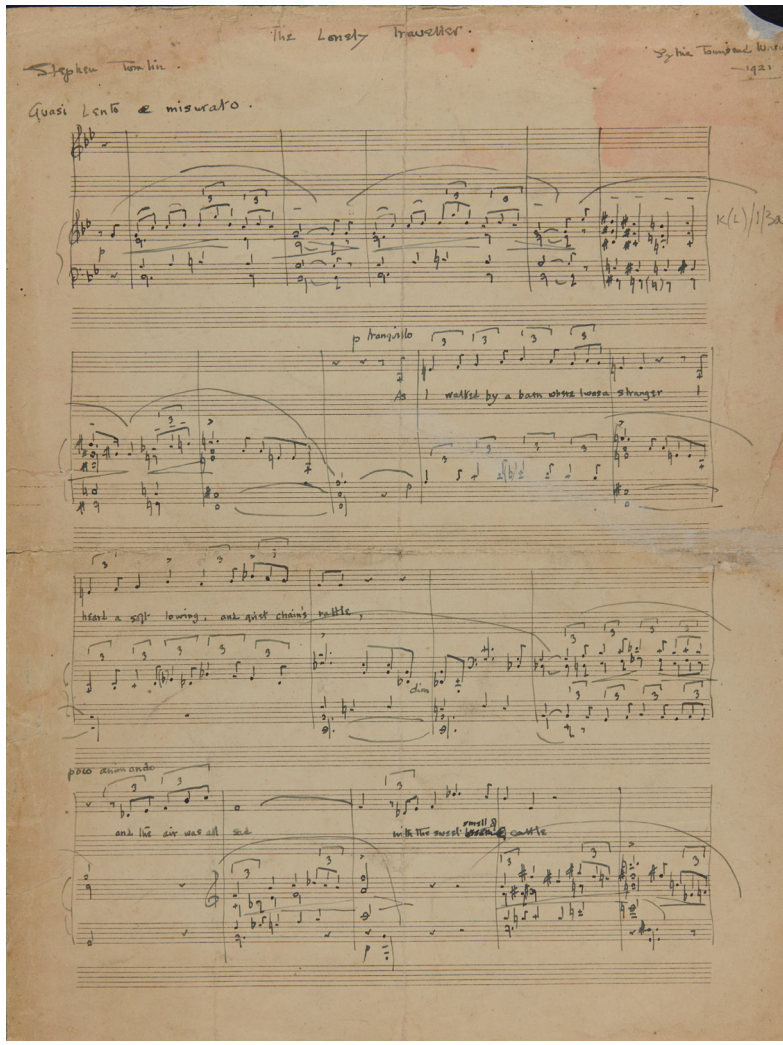


Figure 4. Page from Warner's score of 'The Lonely Traveller' (Source: Reproduced with permission of the Dorset History Centre; DHC reference D/TWA/A12).

causes of war, but the subaltern's voice in the poem expresses resignation, not protest. By setting 'The Subalterns' Warner was addressing the aftermath of the 1914–18 war through the precedent of an earlier one, as she had done in her 'Memorial – Rhapsody for Solo Voice and String Quartet 1918–1920' with the words of two of Whitman's elegiac poems of the American Civil War. Hardy's poem had been published during the Second Boer War of 1899–1902 in his collection *Poems of the Past and Present* (1901), a title which itself urges us to take a longer view of human conflict.

One final song by Warner invites comment here. This was a setting of a short poem written in 1921 by Stephen Tomlin (Figure 4). Lynn Mutti calls this 'possibly the final piece that she composed and kept' and explains that it relates to Chaldon Herring, where Tomlin introduced Warner to Theodore Powys and his family.

> As I walked by a barn where I was a stranger
> I heard a soft lowing, and quiet chain's rattle,
> And the air was all sad with the sweet smell of cattle
> Breathing great peaceful sighs into their manger.[9]

Tomlin's rural Dorset setting continues Hardy's literary heritage, and the cattle in their 'manger' may also call to mind Hardy's famous Christmastime poem 'The Oxen'. The speaker in that poem remembers once believing that the oxen in their 'strawy pen' were kneeling in tribute to the baby Jesus in the manger, but says he's older and dubious now. Tomlin was a close friend of Warner's at this time, so her setting of the poem would have been an act of friendship; and she may creatively have been drawn by the musical quality of his quatrain, with its falling feminine rhymes and its delicate modulation between anapaests and amphibrachs. After Tomlin's death she commemorated him (as 'Billy Williams') in another musical context in her affectionate and very funny story 'A Night with Nature', set in the summer of 1921. Sylvia and Billy set out from London to spend a night al fresco on a heath in Sussex. A kindly local woman takes them for a courting couple and brings them a picnic; she is rewarded by their singing Purcell duets to her: 'If there were any poachers or gamekeepers about they must have thought it very odd.'[10]

Warner's Hardy settings have been performed very seldom, but twice in recent years under the auspices of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society, first in St Anne's College, Oxford, on 3 May 2008 and second in the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester on 30 June 2012.[11] The latter

concert was arranged by Lynn Mutti, with the indispensable collaboration of Dr Richard Hall of the Dorset Rural Music School. Dr Hall edited some of Warner's draft manuscripts into a singable – and indeed publishable – form for the concert (Figures 5 and 6), and he has been kind enough to write some notes about the occasion, and in particular on Warner's settings of Hardy and Tomlin:

> When the late Lynn Mutti invited me to arrange the musical aspect of the 'Sylvia Townsend Warner Symposium' in 2012, there were a number of boxes which we thought needed to be ticked: as well as music by her friends and contemporaries, we felt it was vital that we should also perform some Tudor music which she had edited, a musical setting of some of her words and also some of her original compositions. The four Tudor motets we sang we knew from other, more recent editions, but these in no way improved on the pioneering work which Sylvia had done; and it was a privilege to perform Jonathan David's moving setting of 'Azrael' in the composer's presence.
>
> When it came to choosing examples of Sylvia's own music, we made a shortlist of four possible works – three solo songs with piano accompaniment and a Latin choral motet. This last looked to be an interesting proposition, the Easter text 'Dum Transisset' set for six-part choir, showing the clear influence of Sylvia's work on early music but in a style which moves beyond the stylistic boundaries observed by Tudor composers. With some reluctance I decided not to perform this piece; in the time and with the forces available I wasn't sure that we would do it full justice and there were also a number of bars where Sylvia had clearly had second thoughts and it wasn't always clear what her final intentions might have been.
>
> This left the three songs: two Hardy settings 'She At His Funeral' and 'The Subalterns', together with 'The Lonely Traveller', from a text by Stephen Tomlin. In 'The Subalterns' [Figure 7] Sylvia certainly captures Hardy's bleak vision with the vocal line (scrupulous of course in details of stress and scansion) freely wandering in quintuple time against a piano part with its own chilly stretches of bare octaves or parallel perfect fourths, sometimes set against pedal notes. Again there are crossings out and ambiguities in the copy which suggest that this might represent work in progress rather than a finished composition.

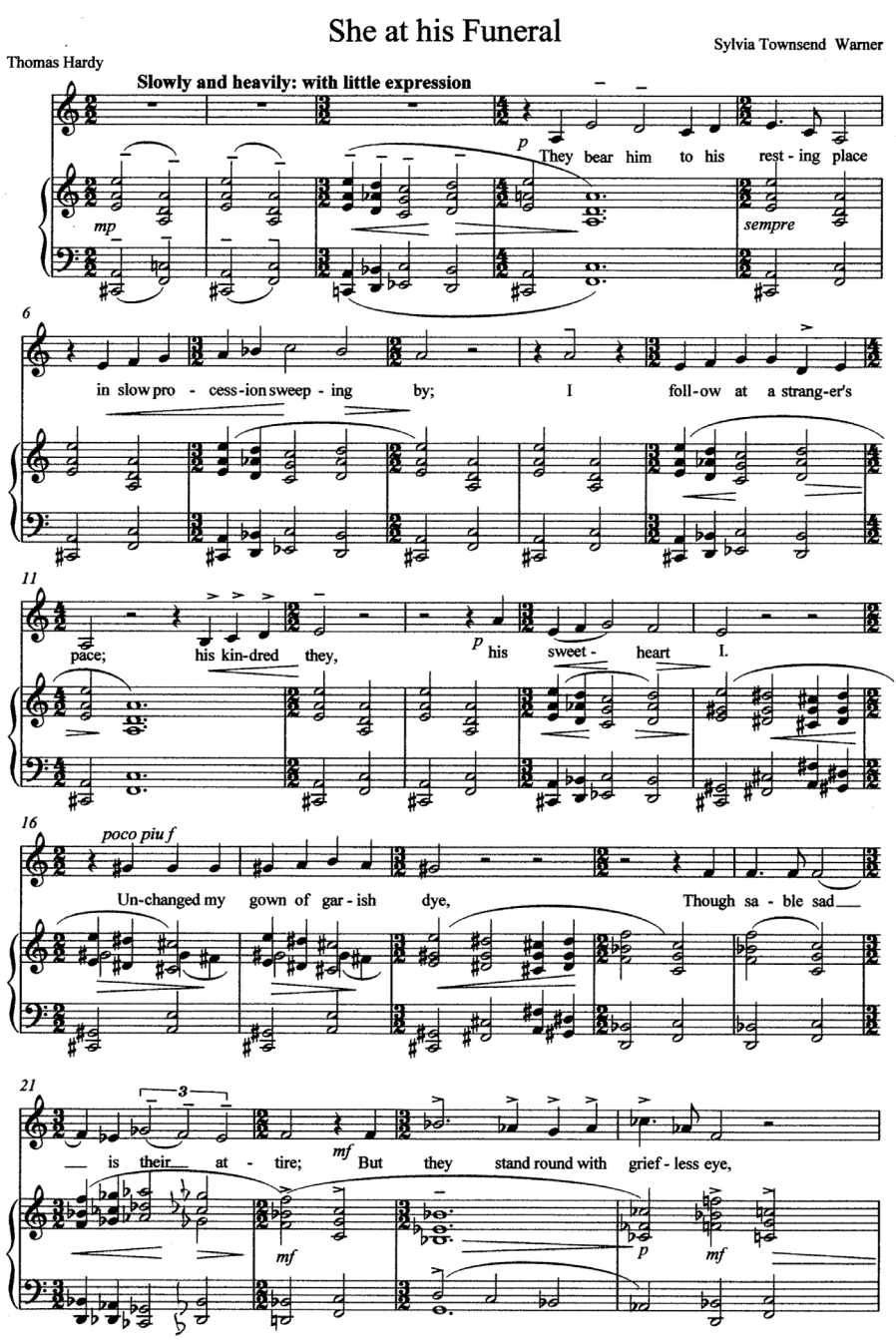
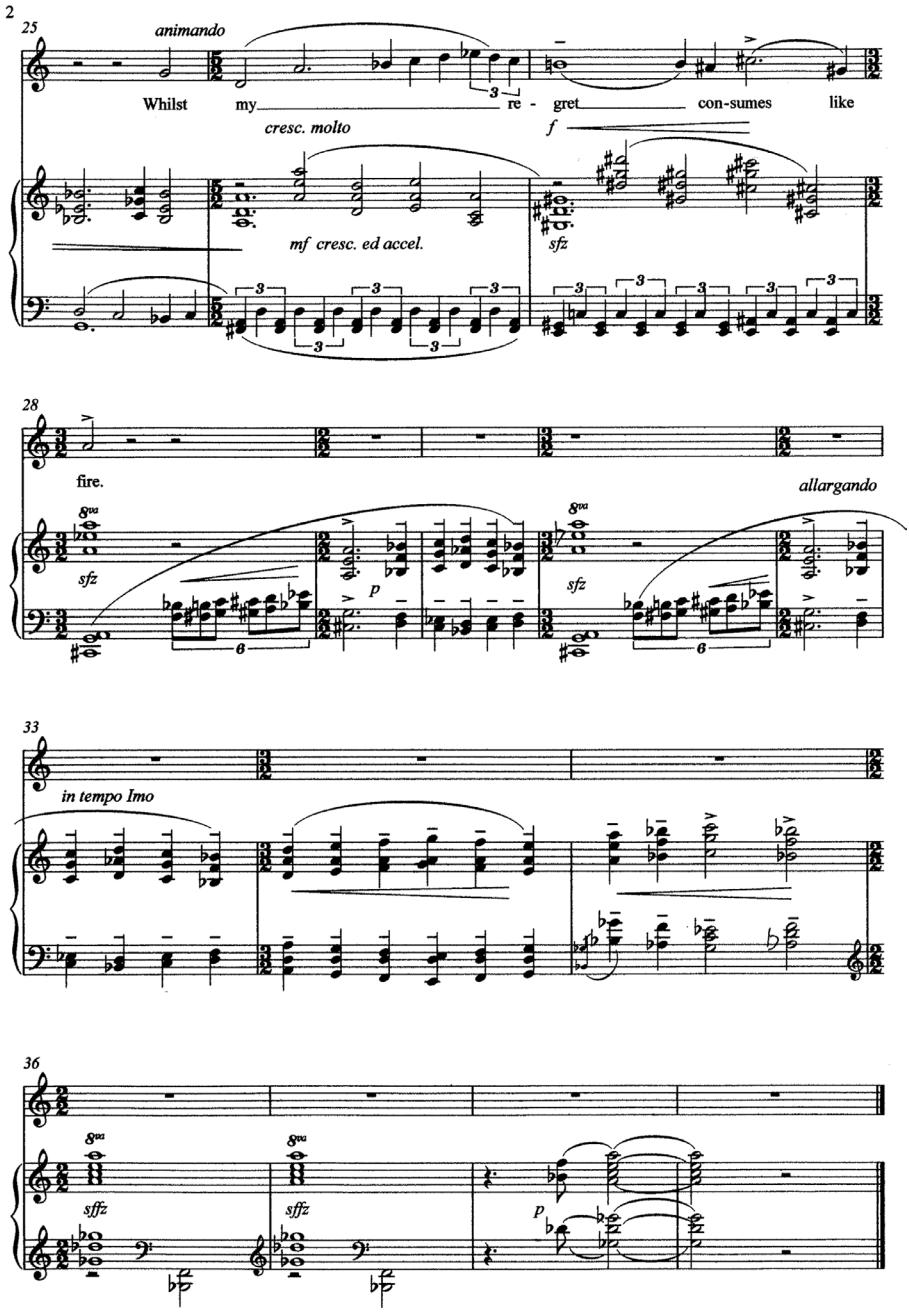


Figure 5. Warner's setting of 'She At His Funeral', edited by Richard Hall (Source: Reproduced with permission of Richard Hall).


2
25
animando
Whilst my re - gret con-sumes like
cresc. molto
f
mf cresc. ed accel.
sfz
28
fire.
allargando
8va
sfz
p
8va
sfz
33
in tempo Imo
36
8va
sffz
8va
sffz
p

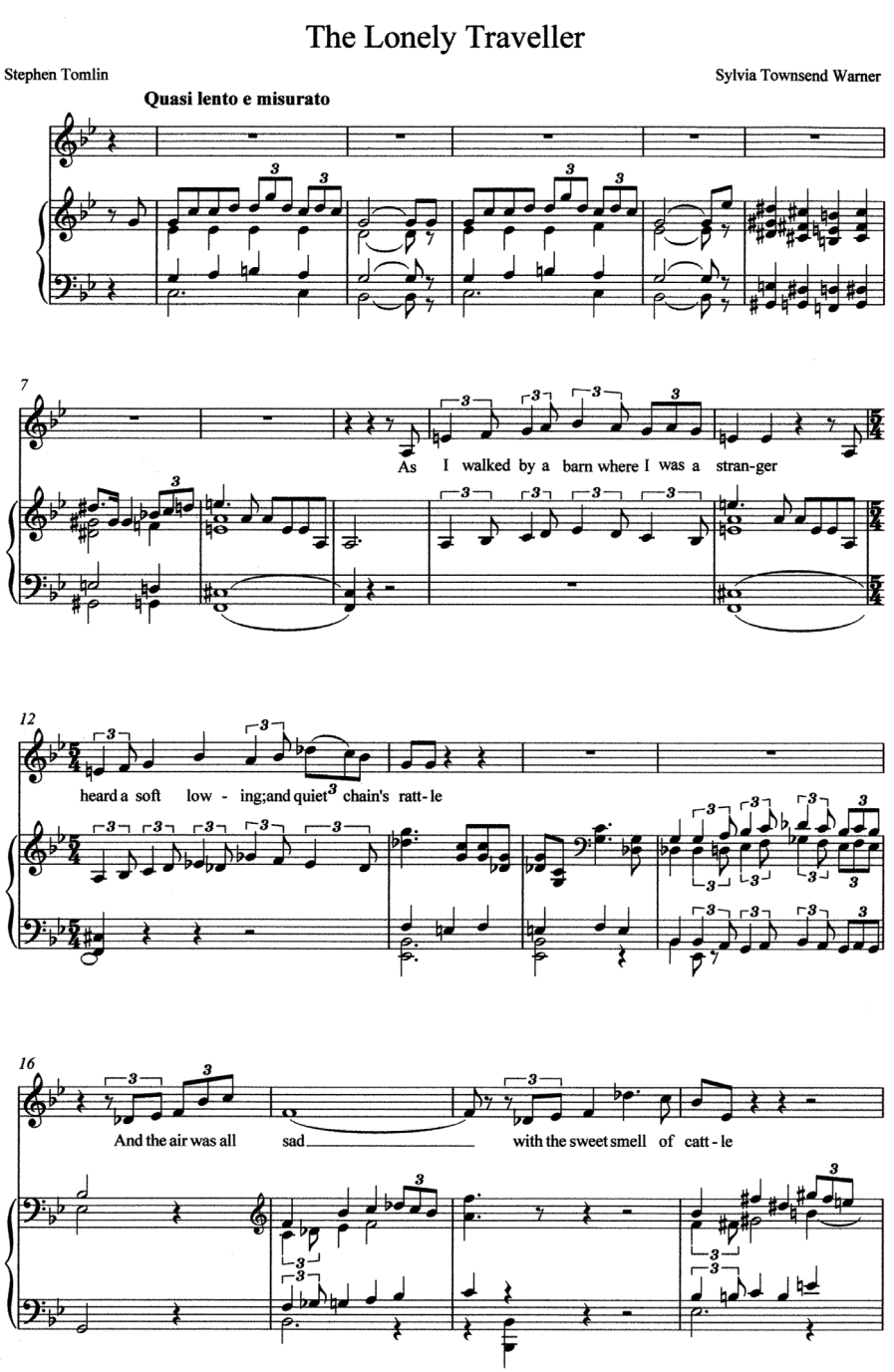
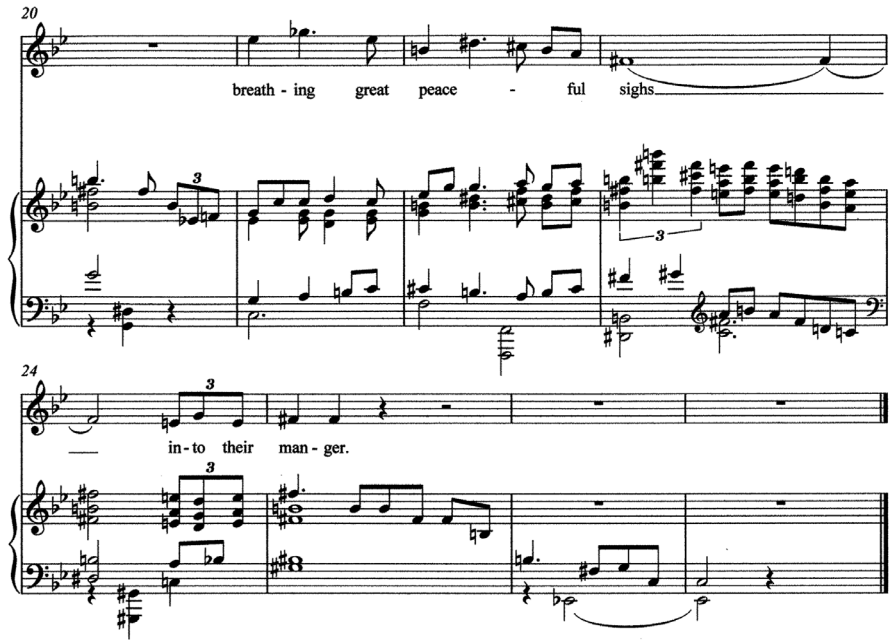


Figure 6. Warner's setting of 'The Lonely Traveller' edited by Richard Hall (Source: Reproduced with permission of Richard Hall).


20
breath - ing great peace - ful sighs
24
in - to their man - ger.

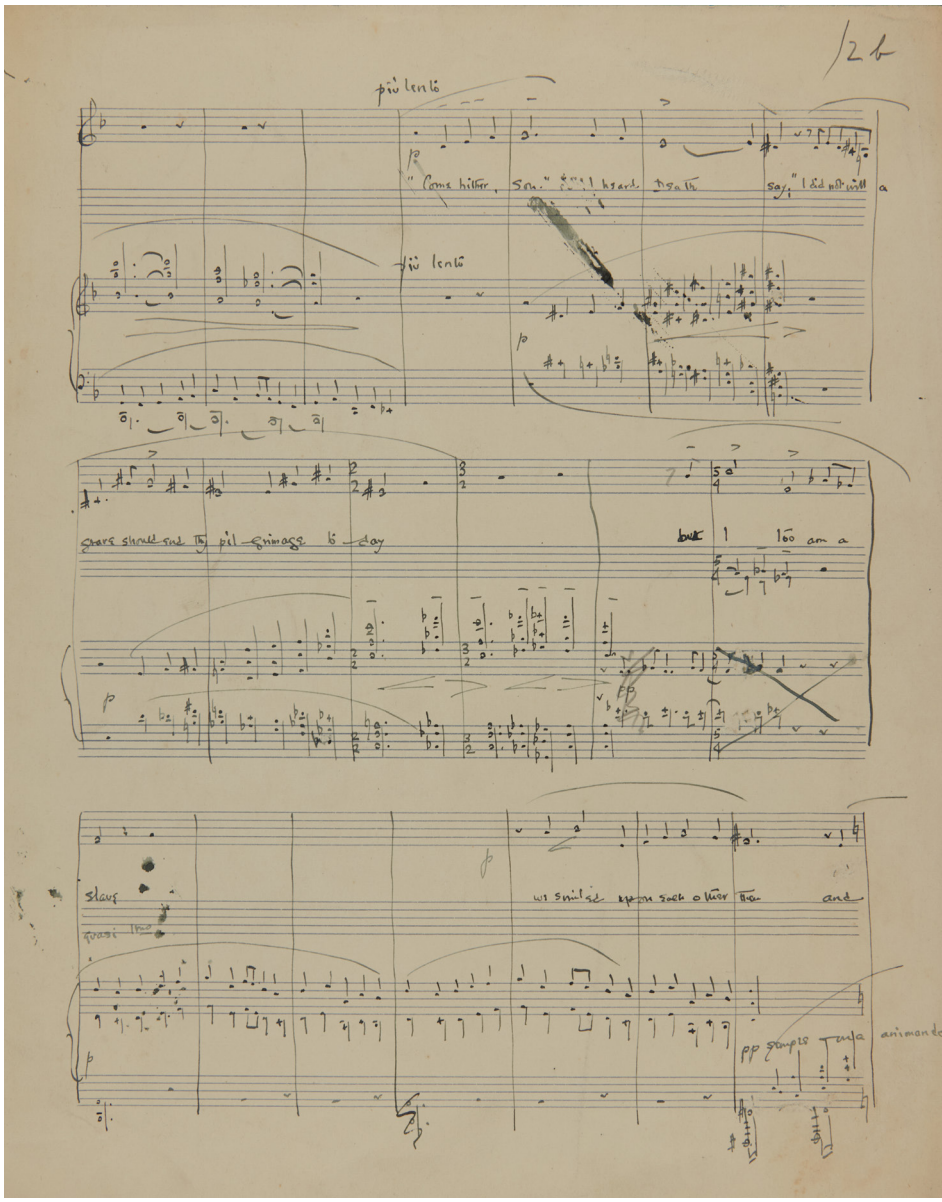


Figure 7. Page from Warner's score of 'The Subalterns' (Source: Reproduced with permission of the Dorset History Centre; DHC reference D/TWA/A12).

'She At his Funeral' offers no such ambiguities, indeed it is carefully marked with details of dynamics, articulation and rhythmic stress. The vocal line again moves freely against the chordal accompaniment in a largely syllabic setting which only breaks into melisma supported by the piano's triplet rhythm as 'She' gives powerful vent to her emotion in the last line of the poem. The harmonic aspect of this song is interesting in that the first section makes extensive use of the type of false relation effect beloved of the Tudor composers; but as the mood of the poem evolves, so the harmony becomes more freely chromatic culminating in unresolved reiterated harsh discords in the final bars. Words and music achieve a powerful blend in this song.

'The Lonely Traveller' shows some similarities to the other two songs, though one can hardly refer to stylistic fingerprints based on such a small sample. The opening bars establish a fairly stable modal feel to the harmony which becomes more relaxed as the song unfolds and again there are passages of bare parallel movement both between the voice and piano, and sometimes within the accompaniment only. What sets this song apart is a more conscious manipulation of the musical material; several motifs are developed and the final phrase is an imaginative reworking of the opening. The poem is very brief – four lines only – and Sylvia matches its directness and economy and also captures its poignant and elusive quality.

In the generous acoustic of the Victorian Hall in Dorchester Museum as performed by a mezzo-soprano with an admirably spontaneous, though technically assured, quality to her singing these songs certainly made their effect and make one wonder if there might not be more music by Sylvia that would merit disinterment and performance.

* * *

Warner's wider engagements with Hardy in her poetry and fiction are too large a topic for this discussion, though manifestly a rewarding one that deserves to be explored further.[12] But I will finish this brief account of their literary and musical relationship by considering Warner's comments on Hardy in her letters, diaries and critical writings. These are not numerous but they are full of interest and point; she knew his work thoroughly and had distinctive opinions about it.

When, for instance, William Maxwell in 1967 asked her for recommendations about which Hardy novel to read next after *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, she replied with a quick survey.

> Hardy: I would say, *The Woodlanders*, unless you have read it already; or *The Return of the Native*. The *T. Major* always strikes me as a poor attempt to regain *Far From the Madding Crowd*, though critics consider it preliminary to *The Dynasts* (by the way, *The Dynasts* is very fine indeed, and very meaty and would do to take to the West Indies if you get there). *Desperate Remedies* is technically enthralling, his dementia of cup and lip plots at its extremest; but one can only read it cold-heartedly, I think. *The Woodlanders* is lovely, it has a Samuel Palmer quality, a hazy glow. And it has one of his best-imagined women. Perhaps that is why his women are better than his men – that he imagined them with more feeling. And of course their skirts were a considerable help – I mean, he was freer to imagine their sexuality.[13]

In her previous letter to Maxwell she had remembered her formative childhood reading of *Far From the Madding Crowd*:

> It was my first Hardy novel, as well as one of my first novels […] I can still remember the physical excitement which shook me at his 'grand effects': a girl crossing a swamp, a thunderstorm at night, Sergeant Troy's sword exercise. And above all a night-piece of the morning constellations. I can't have been much over ten […] then I had to be quite grown up before I could enjoy another Hardy. The inoculation had taken so thoroughly. [14]

An earlier letter to Maxwell written in 1958 had focused on the 'latent musicianship' of Hardy's poetry:

> I am glad I provoked you into re-reading Hardy's poems; the pessimism is his own, and so, I suppose, is that 'abounding in things petrified' acquisitiveness for odd words; but there is a ghostly tinkle of Tom Moore's guitar, which he must have heard in his youth, preserved in the lyrics of Thomas Haynes Bailey: 'When other lips', and 'Scenes that are brightest', and 'She wore a wreath of roses', trilled through by Emma Lavinia, and bellowed out by the crack singer in the village public house; and when he was old, it came

> back to him, and he made ravishing use of it. His poems *set* very well. Do you know Ben Britten's group of them?[15]

'His poems *set* very well': Warner herself must have discovered this some 40 years earlier. She chooses not to touch on her insider knowledge here in the letter, but her musical training shows in the quietly impressive familiarity with early-nineteenth-century song – not only with the famous Tom Moore, author of *Irish Melodies* (1807), but also his younger contemporary Thomas Haynes Bayly, author of *Melodies of Various Nations* (1820). Bayly was a popular poet, playwright and songwriter in his day, a writer of sentimental songs that usually visit love, loss and regret, often with a vista of 'Long, long ago', the title of his best-known song.

The Britten group of Hardy poems that Warner alludes to was *Winter Words*, settings for tenor and piano of eight of his poems, only one of them in fact taken from *Winter Words* itself, Hardy's posthumously published final volume (1928). Warner heard the songs performed by Britten and Peter Pears in February 1954.

> The Britten-Pears concert [in Dorchester], with Britten's new cycle of Hardy poems. All have power, and his particular forthrightness, and poetic reading of the words: those I was most impressed by were The Travelling Boy, with its reiterated figure in the accompaniment, a bouncing futile phrase with the frustration of To Lincolnshire to Lancashire to buy a pocket-handkercher; and the last, Before Life and After, which is noble like a slow dance, a sarabande-like solemn climbing.[16]

'The Travelling Boy' refers to Britten's setting of 'Midnight on the Great Western', sometimes also called 'The Journeying Boy'. Each stanza of 'Midnight on the Great Western' starts with a plangent slow phrase in the piano accompaniment followed by the 'bouncing futile' one that Warner vividly describes, with a phrase that evokes Hardy's compassionate irony as well as Britten's choice of rhythm.

In the same year as the Britten concert she reviewed Evelyn Hardy's *Thomas Hardy: A critical biography* for *Britain Today*. Like the 1967 letter to Maxwell, the review affirms her high opinion of *The Dynasts*, 'a synthesis of Hardy the poet and Hardy the novelist, working together, and neither of them thwarted or deprived'.[17] Such a critical valuation was more unorthodox in the mid-1950s than it had been in Warner's youth in the years after the publication of the 'epic drama' in its entirety

in 1910. But the most interesting part of the review, especially in the context of this discussion, is its opening, an extended passage about the continued importance of music in Hardy's life and work. She praises the biographer's

> recognition of Hardy's sensibility to music and of the way his latent musicianship crops up in his writing, whether as a passion that helps to shape the plot, or as a fineness of ear which catches and defines the minutest sounds of nature, or as a metrical inventiveness which gave such variety to his lyrics. It was an accurate sensibility, moreover. Hardy is one of the few English writers (Shakespeare is another) who cannot be faulted in his musical technicalities; and where he makes use of this technical *savoir faire* – as for instance in the metaphor of tonalities in the Apology to *Late Lyrics and Earlier*[18] – one feels that he has a peculiar satisfaction in doing so, as though, wedlocked to writing, he were keeping clandestine assignations with his first love.[19]

This account of Hardy's musicianship sees it as an influence that goes far and wide in his work, not just the 'fineness of ear' and 'metrical inventiveness' that you might expect as part of the analogy between music and writing, but very suggestively 'a passion that helps to shape the plot', as though a story were a symphony or sonata. Warner must surely have been privately weighing the applicability of these phrases to the influence of music on her own literary practice. She too has many stories bolstered by her 'technical *savoir faire*', several of them illuminated by Gillian Beer's article on 'Music and the Condition of Being Alive: The example of Sylvia Townsend Warner'.[20] Warner's witty evocation of clandestine romance breathes the atmosphere of Hardy's fictions, and may also quietly glance at the restrictions put on her own love of concert-going by Valentine Ackland's lack of enthusiasm for music.

Warner's review, titled 'The True Ear', develops the speculation about Hardy's abiding musicianship into far-reaching thoughts about his art.

> The power of music was a power which Hardy accepted without demur, for in music there was nothing to vex his sense of justice, nothing to deplore or gainsay: one tunes the fiddle; and the tuning of a fiddle is something under a man's control, unlike the fall of events, the way of the world or the ways of a woman. The pleasure of playing in the church band might have kept Thomas Hardy at

> least an acquiescent churchman. He would have questioned the right dealings of the parson, no doubt, and imagined his funeral; but perhaps not God's Funeral.[21]

Music here seems to be on the side of accepting something without demur, not protesting its injustice or randomness. We might connect this to Warner's own choice of Hardy poems to set, ones that produce a broad panorama of the lamentable but unopposable woes of the world. But Hardy's art, like Warner's, is something other than 'acquiescent' taken all in all. It combines a powerful impulse towards resignation with the vexation, demurring and deploring that Warner touches on. Warner captured these conflicting forces in Hardy's work when she said that Walter de la Mare shared with him an 'element of questioning and resigned cavilling'.[22] This brilliantly paradoxical phrase seems to be in two minds about the artistic value of 'cavilling' – usually an unimpressed social word, not an elevating aesthetic one, but Hardy's cavilling is richly seen here as a way to contain and express the opposed forces of a 'questioning' and a 'resigned' spirit. Warner is Hardy's heir in embodying such an ambiguity of feeling within her work, which expresses alike her socio-political energies of judgement and protest, and her belief that art should embody a cool, detached and dispassionate acceptance of the world.

Note on contributor

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Declarations and conflicts of interest

Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

Consent for publication statement

Not applicable to this article.

Conflicts of interest statement

The author is current editor of this journal. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the reviewers during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article

Notes

1 Lynn Mutti, 'Sylvia Townsend Warner: A musical life' (PhD thesis, UCL, 2019), p. 86; and see, more generally, Chapter 2, 'Early Life, Music and Composing', pp. 51–94.

2 *The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy: Further letters 1861–1927*, eds. Michael Millgate and Keith Wilson, 8 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), vol. viii, p. 176.

3 Letter to Thomas Hardy, 5 December 1919. Dorset History Centre reference number D/TWA/WG/15.

4 'The Pretty Ploughboy' is song number 146 in *Traditional Tunes, a Collection of Ballad Airs, chiefly obtained in Yorkshire and the South of Scotland*, collected and edited by Frank Kidson (Oxford: C. Taphouse and Son, 1891).

5 The Dorset History Centre reference numbers for the scores are D/TWA/A12, (K(L)/1/1) for the *Memorial* and D/TWA/A12, (K(L)/1/4) for 'Dum Transisset Sabbatum'.

6 P. C. Buck et al., eds., *Tudor Church Music, Vol. 3: John Taverner, c. 1495–1545, Part II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924), pp. 37–45.

7 *The Complete Poetical Works of Thomas Hardy*, ed. Samuel Hynes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), vol. 1, pp. 328–30 ('The Pine Planters'; from *Time's Laughingstocks*); p. 14 ('She At His Funeral'; from *Wessex Poems and Other Verses*); p. 155 ('The Subalterns'; from *Poems of the Past and Present*).

8 She would write to William Maxwell in 1967 that '*The Woodlanders* is lovely, it has a Samuel Palmer quality, a hazy glow. And it has one of his best-imagined women'; I take the woman to be probably though not certainly Marty South. See *The Element of Lavishness: Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner and William Maxwell 1938–1978*, ed. Michael Steinman (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 2001), pp. 172–3; letter of 6 March 1967. See note 13 below.

9 Mutti, 'A Musical Life', p. 94.

10 'A Night with Nature' in Sylvia Townsend Warner, *A Garland of Straw* (New York: Viking Press, 1943), pp. 146–55; p. 146.

11 For descriptions of these occasions, see Lynn Mutti, 'STW, music and the dreaming spires', *Sylvia Townsend Warner Society Newsletter* 17 (2008), n.p. [2–3]: http://townsendwarner.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/STW-Society-Newsletter-No.-17.pdf (12 November 2024); and Richard Searle and Judith Stinton, 'Words and music with Sylvia Townsend Warner', *Sylvia Townsend Warner Society Newsletter* 25 (2012), n.p. [5–6): http://townsendwarner.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/STW-Society-Newsletter-No.-25.pdf (accessed 24 November 2024).

12 See Peter Robinson's article in this issue: 'Hardy and Warner haunting graveyards', *The Journal of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society* 24 (2024), pp. 139–65, for a searching and extended comparison between the poetry of the two.

13 Steinman, ed., *The Element of Lavishness*, pp. 172–3; letter of 6 March 1967. See also note 8 above.
14 Steinman, ed., *The Element of Lavishness*, p. 170; letter of 18 January 1967.
15 Steinman, ed., *The Element of Lavishness*, pp. 67–8; letter of 9 March 1958. The phrase 'latent musicianship' comes from Warner's review of a biography of Hardy reprinted in Sylvia Townsend Warner, *With the Hunted: Selected Writings*, ed. Peter Tolhurst (Norwich: Black Dog Books, 2012), p. 213. See note 17 below.
16 Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Diaries*, ed. Claire Harman (London: Chatto & Windus, 1994), p. 206; entry for 10 February 1954. *Winter Words* had its premiere in October 1953. It comprised eight of Hardy's poems, namely 'At Day-Close in November', 'Midnight on the Great Western' (or 'The Journeying Boy'), 'Wagtail and Baby', 'The Little Old Table', 'The Choirmaster's Burial', 'Proud Songsters', 'At the Railway Station, Upway' and 'Before Life and After'. Two further Hardy poems were originally intended for inclusion in the cycle: 'If It's Ever Spring Again' and 'The Children and Sir Nameless'.
17 The review is reprinted in Warner, *With the Hunted*, pp. 213–15.
18 Hardy suggests that 'the juxtaposition of unrelated, even discordant, effusions' means that 'less alert' readers 'might not perceive when the tone altered': 'should any one's train of thought be thrown out of gear by a consecutive piping of vocal reeds in jarring tonics, without a semiquaver's rest between, and be led thereby to miss the writer's aim and meaning in one out of two contiguous compositions, I shall deeply regret it'. Thomas Hardy, *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1922), pp. xii–xiii.
19 Warner, *With the Hunted*, p. 213.
20 Gillian Beer, 'Music and the condition of being alive: The example of Sylvia Townsend Warner', *The Journal of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society* 15, no. 1 (2014), pp. 51–76.
21 Warner, *With the Hunted*, pp. 213–14.
22 Review of *O Lovely England* by Walter de la Mare, *Britain Today* (1954) in Warner, *With the Hunted*, pp. 282–5 (p. 285); she has recourse again to musical analogies to describe de la Mare's 'boding fatalism, unequivocal as a ground-bass, and carrying the narrative as a ground-bass carries the chaconne' (p. 285).

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