

= Peter Warlock =

Philip Arnold Heseltine (30 October 1894 ? 17 December 1930) , known by the pseudonym Peter Warlock , was a British composer and music critic . The Warlock name , which reflects Heseltine 's interest in occult practices , was used for all his published musical works . He is best known as a composer of songs and other vocal music ; he also achieved notoriety in his lifetime through his unconventional and often scandalous lifestyle .

As a schoolboy at Eton College , Heseltine met the British composer Frederick Delius , with whom he formed a close friendship . After a failed student career in Oxford and London , Heseltine turned to musical journalism , while developing interests in folk @-@ song and Elizabethan music . His first serious compositions date from around 1915 . Following a period of drift and inactivity , a positive and lasting influence on his work arose from his meeting in 1916 with the Dutch composer Bernard van Dieren ; he also gained creative impetus from a year spent in Ireland , studying Celtic culture and language . On his return to England in 1918 , Heseltine began composing songs in a distinctive , original style , while building a reputation as a combative and controversial music critic . During 1920 ? 21 he edited the music magazine The Sackbut . His most prolific period as a composer came in the 1920s , when he was based first in Wales and later at Eynsford in Kent .

Through his critical writings , published under his own name , Heseltine made a pioneering contribution to the scholarship of early music . In addition , he produced a full @-@ length biography of Delius and wrote , edited , or otherwise assisted the production of several other books and pamphlets . Towards the end of his life , Heseltine became depressed by a loss of his creative inspiration . He died in his London flat of coal gas poisoning in 1930 , probably by his own hand .

= = Life = =

= = = Early life = = =

= = = = Childhood and family background = = = =

Heseltine was born on 30 October 1894 at the Savoy Hotel , London , which his parents were using at the time as their town residence . The family was wealthy , with strong artistic connections and some background in classical scholarship . Philip 's parents were Arnold Heseltine , a solicitor in the family firm , and Bessie Mary Edith , née Covernton . She was the daughter of a country doctor from the Welsh border town of Knighton and was Arnold 's second wife . Soon after Philip 's birth , the family moved to Chelsea where he attended a nearby kindergarten and received his first piano lessons .

In March 1897 Arnold Heseltine died suddenly at the age of 45 . Six years later , Bessie married a Welsh landowner and local magistrate , Walter Buckley Jones , and moved to Jones 's estate , Cefn Bryntalch , Llandyssil , near Montgomery , although the London house was retained . The youthful Philip was proud of his Welsh heritage and retained a lifelong interest in Celtic culture ; later he would live in Wales during one of his most productive and creative phases .

In 1903 Heseltine entered Stone House Preparatory School in Broadstairs , where he showed precocious academic ability and won several prizes . In January 1908 , at a concert in the Royal Albert Hall , he heard a performance of *Lebenstanz* , composed by Frederick Delius . The work made little impression on him until he discovered that his uncle , Arthur Joseph Heseltine (known as " Joe ") , an artist , lived close to Delius 's home in Grez @-@ sur @-@ Loing in France . Philip then used the connection to obtain the composer 's autograph for Stone House 's music teacher , W. E. Brockway .

= = = = Eton : first meeting with Delius = = = =

Heseltine left Stone House in the summer of 1908 and began at Eton College that autumn . His biographer Ian Parrott records that he loathed Eton , " with its hearty adolescent bawling of Victorian hymns in an all @-@ male college chapel " . He was equally unhappy with other aspects of school life , such as the Officers ' Training Corps , the suggestive homosexuality , and endemic bullying . He found relief in music and , perhaps because of the connection with his uncle , formed an interest in Delius that developed into a near @-@ obsession . He also found a kindred spirit in an Eton music teacher and Delius advocate , the cellist Edward Mason , from whom Heseltine borrowed a copy of the score of Sea Drift . He thought it " heavenly " , and was soon requesting funds from his mother to purchase more of Delius 's music . According to Cecil Gray , Heseltine 's first biographer , " [Heseltine] did not rest until he had procured every work of Delius which was then accessible " .

In June 1911 Heseltine learned that Thomas Beecham was to conduct an all @-@ Delius concert at London 's Queen 's Hall on the 16th of that month , at which the composer would be present , and his Songs of Sunset would be given its first performance . Colin Taylor , a sympathetic Eton piano tutor , secured permission from the school for Heseltine to attend the event . Prior to this , his mother had contrived to meet Delius in her London home ; as a consequence , during the concert intermission Heseltine was introduced to the composer . The next day he wrote Delius a long appreciative letter : " I cannot adequately express in words the intense pleasure it was to me to hear such perfect performances of such perfect music " . He told his mother that " Friday evening was the most perfectly happy evening I have ever spent , and I shall never forget it " . Delius became the first strong formative influence of Heseltine 's compositional career , and although the initial adulation was later modified , a friendship began that would largely endure for the remainder of Heseltine 's life .

= = = Cologne , Oxford and London = = =

By the summer of 1911 , a year before he was due to leave the school , Heseltine had tired of life at Eton . Without a clear plan for his future , he asked his mother if he could live abroad for a while . His mother wanted him to go to university , and then either into the City or the Civil Service , but she agreed to his request with the proviso that he would resume his education later . In October 1911 he proceeded to Cologne to learn German and to study piano at the conservatory . In Cologne Heseltine produced his first few songs which , like all his earliest works , were highly imitative of Delius . The piano studies went poorly , although Heseltine expanded his musical experiences by attending concerts and operas . He also experimented with general journalism , publishing an article in Railway and Travel Monthly on the subject of a disused Welsh branch line .

In March 1912 Heseltine returned to London and engaged a tutor to prepare for his university entrance examinations . He spent time with Delius at that summer 's Birmingham Festival , and published his first music criticism , an article on Arnold Schoenberg that appeared in the Musical Standard in September 1912 . Despite his mother 's wishes and his lack of formal musical training , he hoped to make a career in music . He consulted Delius , who advised him that , if his mind was set , he should follow his instincts and pursue this objective in the face of all other considerations . Beecham , who knew both men , later sharply criticised this advice , on the grounds of Heseltine 's immaturity and instability . " Frederick should never have committed the psychological blunder of preaching the doctrine of relentless determination to someone incapable of receiving it " . In the end Heseltine acceded to his mother 's wishes . After passing the necessary examinations , he was accepted to study classics at Christ Church , Oxford , and began there in October 1913 .

A female acquaintance at Christ Church described the 19 @-@ year @-@ old Heseltine as " probably about 22 , but he appears to be years older ... 6 feet high , absolutely fit ... brilliant blue eyes ... and the curved lips and highhead carriage of a young Greek God " . Although he enjoyed social success , he soon became depressed and unhappy with Oxford life . In April 1914 he spent part of his Easter vacation with Delius at Grez , and worked with the composer on the scores of An Arabesque and Fennimore and Gerda , in the latter case providing an English version of the libretto . He did not return to Oxford after the 1914 summer vacation ; with his mother 's reluctant consent he moved to Bloomsbury in London , and enrolled at University College London to study language ,

literature and philosophy . In his spare time he conducted a small amateur orchestra in Windsor , after admitting to Delius that he knew nothing of the art of conducting . However , his life as a student in London was brief ; in February 1915 , with the help of Lady Emerald Cunard (a mistress of Beecham) he secured a job as a music critic for the Daily Mail at a salary of £ 100 per year . He promptly abandoned his university studies to begin this new career .

= = = Unsettled years = = =

= = = Music critic = = =

During Heseltine 's four months at the Daily Mail , he wrote about 30 notices , mainly short reports of musical events but occasionally with some analysis . His first contribution , dated 9 February 1915 , described a performance by Benno Moiseiwitsch of Delius 's Piano Concerto in C minor , as " masterly " , while Delius was hailed as " the greatest composer England has produced for two centuries " . The other work in the programme was " the last great symphony that has been delivered to the world " : the Symphony in D minor by Franck . He wrote for other publications ; a 5000 @-@ word article , " Some notes on Delius and his Music " , appeared in the March 1915 issue of The Musical Times , in which Heseltine opined : " There can be no superficial view of Delius 's music : either one feels it in the very depths of one 's being , or not at all " . Only Beecham , Heseltine suggested , was capable of interpreting the music adequately . Heseltine 's last notice for the Daily Mail was dated 17 June ; later that month he resigned , frustrated by the paper 's frequent cutting of his more critical opinions . Unemployed , he spent his days in the British Museum , studying and editing Elizabethan music .

= = = New friends and acquaintances = = =

Heseltine spent much of the 1915 summer in a rented holiday cottage in the Vale of Evesham , with a party that included a young artist 's model named Minnie Lucie Channing , who was known as " Puma " because of her volatile temperament . She and Heseltine soon entered into a passionate love affair . During this summer break Heseltine shocked neighbours by his uninhibited behaviour , which included riding a motorcycle naked down nearby Crickley Hill . However , his letters show that at this time he was often depressed and insecure , lacking any clear sense of purpose . In November 1915 his life gained some impetus when he met D. H. Lawrence and the pair found an immediate rapport . Heseltine declared Lawrence to be " the greatest literary genius of his generation " , and enthusiastically fell in with the writer 's plans to found a Utopian colony in America . In late December he followed the Lawrences to Cornwall , where he tried , unavailingly , to set up a publishing company with them . Passions between Heseltine and Puma had meanwhile cooled ; when she revealed that she was pregnant , Heseltine confided to Delius that he had little liking for her and had no intention of helping her to raise this unwanted child .

In February 1916 Heseltine returned to London , ostensibly to argue for exemption from military service . However , it became clear that there had been a rift with Lawrence ; in a letter to his friend Robert Nichols , Heseltine described Lawrence as " a bloody bore determined to make me wholly his and as boring as he is " . The social centre of Heseltine 's life now became the Café Royal in Regent Street , where among others he met Cecil Gray , a young Scottish composer . The two decided to share a Battersea studio , where they planned various unfulfilled schemes , including a new music magazine , and , more ambitiously , a London season of operas and concerts . Heseltine declined an offer from Beecham to participate in the latter 's English Opera Company , writing to Delius that Beecham 's productions and choices of works were increasingly poor and lacking in artistic value ; in his own venture there would be " no compromise with the mob " . Beecham ridiculed the plan ; he said it would " be launched and controlled by persons without the smallest experience of theatrical life " .

An event of considerable significance in Heseltine 's musical life , late in 1916 , was his introduction

to the Dutch composer Bernard van Dieren . This friendship considerably influenced Heseltine , who for the rest of his life continued to promote the older composer 's music . In November 1916 Heseltine used the pseudonym " Peter Warlock " for the first time , in an article on Sir Eugene Aynsley Goossens ' chamber music for The Music Student .

Puma bore a son in July 1916 , though there is confusion about the child 's exact identity . Most biographers assumed him to be Nigel Heseltine , the future writer who published a memoir of his father in 1992 . However , in that memoir Nigel denied that Puma was his mother ; he was , he says , the result of a concurrent liaison between Heseltine and an unnamed Swiss girl . Subsequently he was given to foster @-@ parents , then adopted by Heseltine 's mother . Parrott records that the son born to Puma was called Peter , and died in infancy . Smith , however , states that Puma 's baby was originally called Peter but was renamed Nigel " for reasons which have not as yet been satisfactorily explained " . Whatever the truth of the paternity , and in spite of their mutual misgivings , Heseltine and Puma were married at Chelsea Register Office on 22 December 1916 .

= = = = Ireland = = = =

By April 1917 Heseltine had again tired of London life . He returned to Cornwall where he rented a small cottage near the Lawrences , and made a partial peace with the writer . By the summer of 1917 , as Allied fortunes in the war stagnated , Heseltine 's military exemption came under review ; to forestall a possible conscription , in August 1917 he moved to Ireland , taking Puma , with whom he had decided he was , after all , in love .

In Ireland Heseltine combined studies of early music with a fascination for Celtic languages , withdrawing for a two @-@ month period to a remote island where Irish was spoken exclusively . Another preoccupation was an increasing fascination with magical and occult practices , an interest first awakened during his Oxford year and revived in Cornwall . A letter to Robert Nichols indicates that at this time he was " tamper [ing] ... with the science vulgarly known as Black Magic " . To his former tutor Colin Taylor , Heseltine enthused about books " full of the most astounding wisdom and illumination " ; these works included Eliphas Levi 's History of Transcendental Magic , which includes procedures for the invocation of demons . These diversions did not prevent Heseltine from participating in Dublin 's cultural life . He met W.B. Yeats , a fellow @-@ enthusiast for the occult , and briefly considered writing an opera based on the 9th @-@ century Celtic folk @-@ tale of Liadain and Curithir . The composer Denis Aylvor has indicated that Heseltine 's obsession with the occult was eventually replaced by his studies in religious philosophies , to which he was drawn through membership of a theosophist group in Dublin . Heseltine 's interest in this field had originally been aroused by Kaikhosru Sorabji , the composer who had introduced him to the music of Béla Bartók .

On 12 May 1918 Heseltine delivered a well @-@ received illustrated lecture , " What Music Is " , at Dublin 's Abbey Theatre , which included musical excerpts from Bartók , the French composer Paul Ladmirault , and van Dieren . Heseltine 's championing of van Dieren 's music led in August 1918 to a vituperative war of words with the music publisher Winthrop Rogers , over the latter 's rejection of several van Dieren compositions . This dispute stimulated Heseltine 's own creative powers , and in his final two weeks in Ireland he wrote ten songs , which later critics have considered to be among his finest work .

= = = = Journalism and The Sackbut = = = =

When Heseltine returned to London at the end of August 1918 he sent seven of his new songs to Rogers for publication . Because of the recent contretemps over van Dieren , Heseltine submitted these pieces as " Peter Warlock " . They were published under this pseudonym , which he thereafter adopted for all his subsequent musical output , reserving his own name for critical and analytical writings . At around this time the composer Charles Wilfred Orr recalled Heseltine as " a tall fair youth of about my own age " , trying without success to convince a sceptical Delius of the merits of van Dieren 's piano works . Orr was particularly struck by Heseltine 's whistling abilities which he

describes as " flute @-@ like in quality and purity " .

For the next few years Heseltine devoted most of his energy to musical criticism and journalism . In May 1919 he delivered a paper to the Musical Association , " The Modern Spirit in Music " , that impressed E.J. Dent , the future Cambridge University music professor . However , much of his writing was confrontational and quarrelsome . He made dismissive comments about the current standards of musical criticism (" the average newspaper critic of music ... is either a shipwrecked or worn @-@ out musician , or else a journalist too incompetent for ordinary reporting ") which offended senior critics such as Ernest Newman . He wrote provocative articles in the Musical Times , and in July 1919 feuded with the composer @-@ critic Leigh Henry over the music of Igor Stravinsky .

In a letter dated 17 July 1919 , Delius advised the younger man to concentrate either on writing or composing : " I ... know how gifted you are and what possibilities are in you " . By this time Heseltine 's privately expressed opinions on Delius 's music were increasingly critical , although in public he continued to sing his former mentor 's praises . In The Musical Times he cited Fennimore and Gerda , Delius 's final opera , as " one of the most successful experiments in a new direction that the operatic stage has yet seen " .

Heseltine had long nurtured a scheme to launch a music magazine , which he intended to start as soon as he found appropriate backing . In April 1920 , Rogers decided to replace his semi @-@ moribund magazine The Organist and Choirmaster , with a new music journal , The Sackbut , and invited Heseltine to edit it . Heseltine presided over nine issues , adopting a style that was combative and often controversial . The Sackbut also organised concerts , presenting works by van Dieren , Sorabji , Ladmirault and others . However , Rogers withdrew his financial backing after five issues . Heseltine then struggled to run it himself for several months ; in September 1921 the magazine was taken over by the publisher John Curwen , who promptly replaced Heseltine as editor .

= = = Productive years in Wales = = =

With no regular income , in the autumn of 1921 Heseltine returned to Cefn Bryntalch , which became his base for the next three years . He found the atmosphere there conducive to creative efforts ; he told Gray that " Wild Wales holds an enchantment for me stronger than wine or woman " . The Welsh years were marked by intense creative compositional and literary activity ; some of Heseltine 's best @-@ known music , including the song @-@ cycles Lilligay and The Curlew , were completed along with numerous songs , choral settings , and a string serenade composed to honour Delius 's 60th birthday in 1922 . Heseltine also edited and transcribed a large amount of early English music . His recognition as an emerging composer was marked by the selection of The Curlew as representing contemporary British music at the 1924 Salzburg Festival .

Heseltine 's major literary work of this period was a biography of Delius , the first full @-@ length study of the composer , which remained the standard work for many years . On its 1952 reissue , the book was described by music publisher Hubert J. Foss as " a work of art , a charming and penetrating study of a musical poet 's mind " . Heseltine also worked with Gray on a study of the 16th @-@ century Italian composer Carlo Gesualdo , although disputes between the two men delayed the book 's publication until 1926 .

While visiting Budapest in April 1921 , Heseltine befriended the then little @-@ known Hungarian composer and pianist Béla Bartók . When Bartók visited Wales in March 1922 to perform in a concert , he stayed for a few days at Cefn Bryntalch . Although Heseltine continued to promote Bartók 's music , there are no records of further meetings after the Wales visit . Heseltine 's on @-@ off friendship with Lawrence finally died , after a thinly disguised and unflattering depiction of Heseltine and Puma (" Halliday " and " Pussum ") appeared in Women in Love , published in 1922 . Heseltine began legal proceedings for defamation , eventually settling out of court with the publishers , Secker and Warburg . Puma , meanwhile , had disappeared from Heseltine 's life . She returned from Ireland before he did , and had lived for a while with the young child Nigel at Cefn Bryntalch where the local gentry considered her " not of the same order of society as we are " . There was no resumption of married life , and she left Heseltine sometime in 1922 .

In September and October 1923 Heseltine accompanied his fellow @-@ composer E.J. Moeran on a tour of eastern England , in search of original folk music . Later that year he and Gray visited Delius at Grez . In June 1924 Heseltine left Cefn Bryntalch and lived briefly in a Chelsea flat , a stay marked by wild parties and considerable damage to the property . After spending Christmas 1924 in Majorca he leased a cottage (formerly occupied by Foss) in the Kent village of Eynsford .

= = = Eynsford = = =

At Eynsford , with Moeran as his co @-@ tenant , Heseltine presided over a bohemian household with a flexible population of artists , musicians and friends . Moeran had studied at the Royal College of Music before and after the First World War ; he avidly collected folk music and had admired Delius during his youth . Although they had much in common , he and Heseltine rarely worked together , though they did co @-@ write a song , " Maltworms " . The other permanent Eynsford residents were Barbara Peache , Heseltine 's long @-@ term girlfriend whom he had known since the early 1920s , and Hal Collins , a New Zealand M?ori who acted as a general factotum . Peache was described by Delius 's assistant Eric Fenby as " a very quiet , attractive girl , quite different from Phil 's usual types " . Although not formally trained , Collins was a gifted graphic designer and occasional composer , who sometimes assisted Heseltine . The household was augmented at various times by the composers William Walton and Constant Lambert , the artist Nina Hamnett , and sundry acquaintances of both sexes .

The ambience at Eynsford was one of alcohol (the " Five Bells " public house was conveniently across the road) and uninhibited sex ; these years are the primary basis for the Warlock legends of wild living and debauchery . Visitors to the house have left accounts of orgies , all @-@ night drunken parties , and rough horseplay that at least once brought police intervention . However , such activities were mainly confined to weekends ; within this unconventional milieu Heseltine accomplished much work , including settings from the Jacobean dramatist John Webster and the modern poet Hilaire Belloc , and the Capriol Suite in versions for string and full orchestra . Heseltine continued to transcribe early music , wrote articles and criticism , and finished the book on Gesualdo . He attempted to restore the reputation of a neglected Elizabethan composer , Thomas Whythorne , with a long pamphlet which , years later , brought significant amendments to Whythorne 's entry in The History of Music in England . He also wrote a general study of Elizabethan music , The English Ayre .

In January 1927 , Heseltine 's string serenade was recorded for the National Gramophonic Society , by John Barbirolli and an improvised chamber orchestra . A year later , HMV recorded the ballad " Captain Stratton 's Fancy " , sung by Peter Dawson . These two are the only recordings of Heseltine 's music released during his lifetime . His association with the poet and journalist Bruce Blunt led to the popular Christmas anthem " Bethlehem Down " , which the pair wrote in 1927 to raise money for their Christmas drinking . By the summer of 1928 his general lifestyle had created severe financial problems , despite his industry . In October he was forced to give up the cottage at Eynsford , and returned to Cefn Bryntalch .

= = = Final years = = =

By November 1928 , Heseltine had tired of Cefn Bryntalch , and returned to London . He sought concert reviewing and cataloguing assignments without much success ; his main creative activity was the editing , under the pseudonym " Rab Noolas " (" Saloon Bar " backwards) , of Merry @-@ Go @-@ Down , an anthology in praise of drinking . The book , published by The Mandrake Press , was copiously illustrated by Hal Collins .

Early in 1929 Heseltine received two offers from Beecham which temporarily restored his sense of purpose . Beecham had founded the Imperial League of Opera (ILO) in 1927 ; he now invited Heseltine to edit the ILO journal . Beecham also asked Heseltine to help organise a festival to honour Delius , which the conductor was planning for October 1929 . Although Heseltine 's enthusiasm for Delius 's music had diminished , he accepted the assignment , and travelled to Grez

in search of forgotten compositions that could be resurrected for the festival . He declared that he was delighted to discover Cynara , for voice and orchestra , abandoned since 1907 . For the festival , Heseltine prepared many of the programme notes for individual concerts and supplied a concise biography of the composer . According to Delius 's wife Jelka : " Next to Beecham , he [Heseltine] really was the soul of the thing " .

At a Promenade Concert in August 1929 , Heseltine conducted a performance of the Capriol Suite , the single public conducting engagement of his life . In an effort to reproduce their success with " Bethlehem Down " , he and Blunt proffered a new carol for Christmas 1929 , " The Frostbound Wood " . Although the work was technically accomplished , it failed to achieve the popularity of its predecessor . Heseltine edited three issues of the ILO journal , but in January 1930 , Beecham announced the closure of the venture , and Heseltine was out of work again . His attempt on behalf of van Dieren to raise financing to mount a performance of the latter 's opera The Tailor also failed .

The final summer of Heseltine 's life was marked by gloom , depression , and inactivity ; Aplvor refers to Heseltine 's sense of " crimes against the spirit " , and an obsession with imminent death . In July 1930 a fortnight spent with Blunt in Hampshire brought a brief creative revival ; Heseltine composed " The Fox " to Blunt 's lyrics , and on his return to London he wrote " The Fairest May " for voice and string quartet . These were his final original compositions .

= = = Death = = =

In September 1930 Heseltine moved with Barbara Peache into a basement flat at 12a Tite Street in Chelsea . With no fresh creative inspiration , he worked in the British Museum to transcribe the music of English composer Cipriani Potter , and made a solo version of " Bethlehem Down " with organ accompaniment . On the evening of 16 December Heseltine met with van Dieren and his wife for a drink and invited them home afterwards . According to van Dieren , the visitors left at about 12 : 15 a.m. Neighbours later reported sounds of movement and of a piano in the early morning . When Peache , who had been away , returned early on 17 December , she found the doors and windows bolted , and smelled coal gas . The police broke into the flat and found Heseltine unconscious ; he was declared dead shortly afterwards , apparently as the result of coal gas poisoning .

An inquest was held on 22 December ; the jury could not determine whether the death was accidental or suicide and an open verdict was returned . Most commentators have considered suicide the more likely cause ; Heseltine 's close friend Lionel Jellinek and Peache both recalled that he had previously threatened to take his life by gas and the outline of a new will was found among the papers in the flat . Much later , Nigel Heseltine introduced a new theory ? that his father had been murdered by van Dieren , the sole beneficiary of Heseltine 's 1920 will , which stood to be revoked by the new one . This theory is not considered tenable by most commentators .

Philip Heseltine was buried alongside his father at Godalming cemetery on 20 December 1930 . In late February 1931 , a memorial concert of his music was held at the Wigmore Hall ; a second such concert took place in the following December . In 2011 the art critic Brian Sewell published his memoirs , in which he revealed that he was Heseltine 's illegitimate son , born in July 1931 seven months after the composer 's death . Sewell 's mother , unnamed , was an intermittent girlfriend , a Roman Catholic who refused Heseltine 's offer to pay for an abortion and subsequently blamed herself for his death . Sewell was unaware of his father 's identity until 1986 .

= = = Legacy = = =

Heseltine 's surviving body of work includes about 150 songs , mostly for solo voice and piano . He also wrote choral pieces , some with instrumental or orchestral accompaniment , and a few purely instrumental works . Among lost or destroyed works the musicologist Ian Copley lists two stage pieces : sketches for the abandoned opera Liadain and Curither , and the draft of a mime @-@ drama Twilight (1926) which Heseltine destroyed on the advice of Delius . Music historian Stephen Banfield described the songs as " polished gems of English art song forming a pinnacle of that genre 's brilliant brief revival in the early 20th century ... [works of] intensity , consistency and

unfailing excellence " . According to Delius 's biographer Christopher Palmer , Heseltine influenced the work of fellow @-@ composers Moeran and Orr , and to a lesser extent Lambert and Walton , primarily by bringing them within the Delius orbit . In the case of the latter pair , Palmer argues , " those reminiscences of Delius which crop up from time to time in [their] music ... are more probably Delius filtered through Warlock " .

Heseltine biographer Brian Collins considers the composer a prime mover in the 20th @-@ century renaissance of early English music ; apart from much writing on the subject , he made well over 500 transcriptions of early works . He also wrote or contributed to ten books , and wrote dozens of general music articles and reviews . Many years later , Gray wrote of Heseltine : " In the memory of his friends , he is as alive now as he ever was when he trod the earth , and so he will continue to be until the last of us are dead " . During his Eynsford years , Heseltine had provided his own epitaph :

Here lies Warlock the composer
Who lived next door to Munn the grocer .
He died of drink and copulation ,
A sad discredit to the nation .

= = Music = =

= = = Influences = = =

In the early 20th century the German @-@ influenced 19th @-@ century song @-@ writing traditions generally followed by Hubert Parry , Charles Villiers Stanford , Edward Elgar and Roger Quilter , were in a process of eclipse . For composers such as Ralph Vaughan Williams and George Butterworth , English folk @-@ song became a dominant feature of their work ; at the same time , songwriters were seeking to extend their art by moving beyond the piano to develop richer forms of vocal accompaniment . Thus , as Copley observes , at the outset of his career as a composer Heseltine found in song @-@ writing a dynamic ambience , " within which he could express himself , or against which he could react " .

By the time Heseltine began composing seriously , around 1915 ? 16 , he had started to shake off the overwhelming influence of Delius . He had discovered English folk @-@ song in 1913 , his Oxford year , and had begun to study Elizabethan and Jacobean music . In 1916 he came under the spell of van Dieren , whose influence soon exceeded that of Delius and led to a significant development in compositional technique , first evident in the Saudades song cycle of 1916 ? 17 . Gray writes that from Van Dieren , Heseltine " learned to purify and organise his harmonic texture ... and the thick , muddy chords which characterised the early songs gave place to clear and vigorous part @-@ writing " . " In 1917 ? 18 Heseltine 's passion for Celtic culture , stimulated by his stay in Ireland , brought a new element to his music , and in 1921 he discovered Bartók . A late passion was the music of John Dowland , the Elizabethan lutenist , one of whose dances he arranged for brass band . These constituent parts contributed to the individual style of Heseltine 's music . Gray summarised this style thus ;

They [the differing elements] are fused together in a curiously personal way : the separate ingredients can be analysed and defined , but not the ultimate product , which is not Dowland plus van Dieren or Elizabethan plus modern , but simply something wholly individual and unanalysable ? Peter Warlock . No one else could have written it .

Apart from those within his circle , Heseltine drew inspiration from other composers whose work he respected : Franz Liszt , Gabriel Fauré , and Claude Debussy . He had , however , a particular dislike for the works of his fellow song @-@ writer Hugo Wolf . Heseltine 's songs demonstrate moods of both darkness and warm good humour , a dichotomy that helped to fuel the idea of a split Warlock / Heseltine personality . This theory was rejected by the composer 's friends and associates , who tended to see the division in terms of " Philip drunk or Philip sober " .

= = = General character = = =

In a summary of the Warlock oeuvre , Copley asserts that Heseltine was a natural melodist in the Schubert mould : " With very few exceptions his melodies will stand on their own ... they can be sung by themselves with no accompaniment , as complete and satisfying as folk @-@ songs " . Copley identifies certain characteristic motifs or " fingerprints " , which recur throughout the works and which are used to depict differences of mood and atmosphere : anguish , resignation but also warmth , tenderness and amorous dalliance . The music critic Ernest Bradbury comments that Heseltine 's songs " serve both singer and poet , the one in their memorably tuneful vocal lines , the other in a scrupulous regard for correct accentuation free from any suggestion of pedantry " .

In musical parlance Heseltine was a miniaturist , a title which he was happy to accept in disregard of the sometimes derogatory implications of the label : " I have neither the impulse nor the ability to erect monuments before which a new generation will bow down " . He was almost entirely self @-@ taught , avoiding through his lack of a formal conservatory training the " teutonic shadow " ? the influence of the German masters . To the charge that his technique was " amateurish " , he responded by arguing that a composer should express himself in his own terms , not by " string [ing] together a number of tags and clichés culled from the work of others " . His compositions were themselves part of a learning process ; The Curlew song cycle originated in 1915 with the setting of a Yeats poem , but did not reach completion until 1922 . Brian Collins characterises this work as " a chronicle of [the composer 's] progress and development " .

= = = Critical appraisal = = =

Heseltine 's music was generally well received by public and critics . The first Warlock compositions to attract critical attention were three of the Dublin songs which Rogers published in 1918 . William Child in The Musical Times thought these " first rate " , and singled out " If Ever I Saw " as having particular distinction . In 1922 , in the same magazine , the short song cycle Mr Belloc 's Fancy was likewise praised , especially " Warlock 's rattling good tunes and appropriately full @-@ blooded accompaniment " . Ralph Vaughan Williams was delighted with the reception accorded to the Three Carols , when he conducted the Bach Choir at the Queen 's Hall in December 1923 . Early in 1925 the BBC broadcast a performance of the Serenade for string orchestra written to honour Delius , a sign , says Smith , that the music establishment was beginning to take Warlock seriously . Heseltine himself noted the warmth of the Prom audience 's reaction to his conducting of the Capriol Suite in 1929 : " I was recalled four times " .

After Heseltine 's death , assessments of his musical stature were generous . Newman considered some of Heseltine 's choral compositions " among the finest music written for massed voices by a modern Englishman . " Constant Lambert hailed him as " one of the greatest song @-@ writers that music has ever known " , a view echoed by Copley . In a tribute published in The Musical Times , van Dieren referred to Heseltine 's music as " a national treasure " that would long survive all that was currently being said or written about it . In subsequent years his standing as a composer diminished ; Brian Collins records how public perceptions of Warlock were distorted by the scandalous reports of his private life , so that his musical importance in the inter @-@ war years became obscured . However , when the Peter Warlock Society was created in 1963 , interest in his music began to increase . Collins acknowledges that the Warlock output includes much that can be dismissed as mere programme @-@ fillers and encore items , but these do not detract from numerous works of the highest quality , " frequently thrilling and passionate and , occasionally , innovative to the point of being revolutionary " .

= = Writings = =

As well as a large output of musical journalism and criticism , Heseltine wrote or was significantly involved in the production of 10 books or long pamphlets :

Frederick Delius (1923) . John Lane , London

Thomas Whythorne : An unknown Elizabethan composer (1925) . Oxford University Press ,

London (pamphlet)

(Editor) Songs of the Gardens (1925) . Nonesuch Press , London (anthology of 18th @-@ century popular songs)

(Preface) Orchésography by Thoinot Arbeau , tr . C.W. Beaumont (1925) . Beaumont , London

The English Ayre (1926) . Oxford University Press , London

(with Cecil Gray) Carlo Gesualdo , Prince of Venosa : Musician and Murderer (1926) . Kegan Paul , London

Miniature Essays : E.J. Moeran (1926) . J. & W. Chester , London (pamphlet , issued anonymously)

(with Jack Lindsay) Loving Mad Tom : Bedlamite verses of the 16th and 17th centuries (1927) . Fanfrolico Press , London (musical transcriptions by Peter Warlock)

(Editor , joint with Jack Lindsay) The Metamorphosis of Ajax (1927) . Fanfrolico Press , London

(Editor under the name " Rab Noolas ") Merry @-@ Go @-@ Down , A Gallery of Gorgeous Drunkards through the ages (1929) (anthology)

At the time of his death Heseltine was planning to write a life of John Dowland .