1972

The Songs of Charles Wilfred Orr With Special Emphasis on His Housman Settings.

Joseph Thomas Rawlins Jr
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/2306

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
RAWLINS, Jr., Joseph Thomas, 1936-
  THE SONGS OF CHARLES WILFRED ORR WITH SPECIAL
  EMPHASIS ON HIS HOUSMAN SETTINGS.

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural
and Mechanical College, D.M.A., 1972
Music

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan
THE SONGS OF CHARLES WILFRED ORR WITH SPECIAL
EMPHASIS ON HIS HOUSMAN SETTINGS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

in

The School of Music

by

Joseph Thomas Rawlins, Jr.
B.M., Louisiana State University, 1959
M.M., Louisiana State University, 1961
August, 1972
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to give special acknowledgement to several people, without whom this document would not have been possible.

First, special thanks is expressed to my voice teacher, Dallas Draper, for several reasons, not the least of which is the excellent musical training that I received under his tutelage. It was he who first introduced me to the songs of Charles Wilfred Orr and to my eventual interest in his music. Because of Mr. Draper's unrelenting insistence upon excellence and his encouragement in many vexatious times, I will always admire him as a teacher, musician, and friend.

Secondly, to Dr. Earl Redding, chairman of my committee, I should like to express my gratitude. This acknowledgement is extended to include the Voice Faculty and Dr. Everett Timm, Dean of The School of Music. Without their perseverance and understanding this document might not have been completed.

Three other members deserve special recognition: Paul Abel and Paul Knowles, whose sage advice will never be forgotten, and Dr. Jack Guerry, whose arduous hours spent in proofreading and correcting this monograph are
greatly appreciated. To these I render my deepest gratitude.

I will forever be in the debt of C. W. Orr, not only because of his endorsement of this project and subsequent assistance, but also because of his beautiful music, which was the ultimate inspiration for this document. I will always be obliged for this unique and personal music which he leaves for posterity.

Grateful acknowledgement is extended to the publishers for their permission to reprint musical examples shown in this paper. They are as follows: Oxford University Press, J. and W. Chester, G. Schirmer, Augener, Western Music Company, and Stainer and Bell.

Finally, I thank my wife, Elizabeth, and daughters, Michelle and Melanie, for their encouragement and tolerance throughout this endeavor. It is they who deserve the highest admiration for their perseverance and understanding.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. CONCEPTS, INFLUENCES, AND MISCONCEPTIONS</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. A SURVEY OF ORR'S SONGS</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. HOUSMAN SETTINGS</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table | Page
-----|-----
1. Songs by C. W. Orr | 69
2. Housman Settings | 81
**LIST OF FIGURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. With Rue My Heart Is Laden</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. On Your Midnight Pallet Lying</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Into My Heart An Air That Kills</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Requiem</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Black Roses</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Black Roses</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Black Roses</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Black Roses</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Is My Team Ploughing?</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Plucking the Rushes</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Silent Noon</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. When the Lad for Longing Sighs</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. When I Was One-and-Twenty</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. With Rue My Heart Is Laden</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. With Rue My Heart Is Laden</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. This Time of Year</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. This Time of Year</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. This Time of Year</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Oh, When I Was in Love with You</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Oh, When I Was in Love with You</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Is My Team Ploughing?</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. On Your Midnight Pallet Lying</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. The Earl of Bristol's Farewell</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Soldier from the Wars Returning</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Whenas I Wake</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. When I Watch the Living Meet</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. The Lent Lily</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Oh Fair Enough Are Sky and Plain</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Bahnhofstrasse</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Westward on the High-Hilled Plains</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Westward on the High-Hilled Plains</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. The Isle of Portland</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. The Isle of Portland</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. In Valleys Green and Still</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Hymn before Sleep</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Hymn before Sleep</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. While Summer On Is Stealing</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Requiem</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Requiem</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Loveliest of Trees</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Loveliest of Trees</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Loveliest of Trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Hymn before Sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>While Summer On Is Stealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>The Lent Lily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Is My Team Ploughing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>On Your Midnight Pallet Lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Requiem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Requiem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>When I Watch the Living Meet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>The Time of Roses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>The Time of Roses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>With Rue My Heart Is Laden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>This Time of Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Is My Team Ploughing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>With Rue My Heart Is Laden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>This Time of Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>This Time of Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Bahnhofstrasse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>With Rue My Heart Is Laden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>On Your Midnight Pallet Lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Is My Team Ploughing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Farewell to Barn and Stack and Tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Is My Team Ploughing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Is My Team Ploughing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>The Lent Lily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74. Hymn before Sleep</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75. Requiem</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76. In Valleys Green and Still</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. When the Lad for Longing Sighs</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Charles Wilfred Orr (born 1893) is an English songwriter whose work has never been fully recognized. His compositional career spanned some thirty-six years, commencing with "Plucking the Rushes" (1921), and concluding with "Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest" (1957). All of his songs utilize English texts, and his affinity for the poetry of A. E. Housman is evident because he employed that poet's texts for twenty-four of his thirty-five vocal compositions.

His compositional style was influenced greatly by German lieder, notably those of Hugo Wolf. Orr's musical language also owes much to his friendship with Frederick Delius, an English composer who was more famous in France and Germany than in his native England. Consequently, Orr's music has been largely rejected by an English audience that has been chiefly interested in a rediscovery of English folk-song, an idiom which holds little interest for the composer.

In addition to observations and comments concerning influences and philosophical concepts governing his musical style, Orr's complete vocal output is discussed in this monograph. The appendix contains Orr's errata, corrections
to the published songs, and, in some cases, alternative versions for sections of the various compositions. There are also tables listing pertinent information on Orr's compositions and on all the known composers who have set Housman's texts.

Despite certain criticisms of Orr's songs, many famous musicians and critics have noted the merits of his compositions. Sidney Northcote, P. M. H. Edwards, Christopher Le Fleming, and Philip Heseltine are but a few who have recognized Mr. Orr's contribution to the vocal repertoire. His songs deserve a place in the history of song literature as some of the most personal and appealing vocal music to be written by a twentieth-century English composer.
INTRODUCTION

Charles Wilfred Orr is a living English songwriter whose work has never been fully recognized. The Oxford Companion to Music\textsuperscript{1} and the British Music of Our Time\textsuperscript{2} did not consider Orr's contribution significant enough to mention; Denis Stevens's History of Song\textsuperscript{3} devotes only two sentences, and James Hall's The Art Song\textsuperscript{4} makes no mention of him whatsoever. The most enlightening article on Orr is found in Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1954 edition, in which Dr. Sidney Northcote surveys his output and records some biographical data.\textsuperscript{5} However, this article is neither current nor complete, since Northcote omitted many compositions and Orr has composed additional songs since the article's publication.

This writer has performed some of Mr. Orr's songs and has acquired his complete vocal output, numbering some thirty-five compositions. Many of the songs are out of print and had to be obtained directly from the composer, who resides at Painswick in Gloucestershire, England.\textsuperscript{6} The noted Canadian scholar and composer, Dr. P. M. H. Edwards, also has in his possession Orr's complete opera, and it is his feeling that Orr's compositions deserve to be better known than they presently are.\textsuperscript{7}
FOOTNOTES


6Preliminary inquiries with the Director of the Guildhall School of Music revealed no address more current than 1919; subsequent research was more fruitful, and initial communication was established, by mail, with the composer in November, 1971.

7Dr. P. M. H. Edwards supported this position in letters to the author on December 15, 1971 and January 28, 1972. He hopes to begin a book on Orr sometime in the near future. Dr. Edwards teaches at The University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.
I. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Charles Wilfred Orr was born at Cheltenham, England, on July 31, 1893. At the age of six months he was vaccinated and had a reaction, resulting in a severe case of eczema. These attacks became increasingly more severe, and, since doctors and specialists could only palliate them, it soon became apparent that he "could never hope to take up an ordinary profession." He received early lessons in piano, harmony, and counterpoint, but these were not initially intended as the foundation for a musical career.

He attended Cheltenham College, after which he joined an Officers Training Corps in 1915. After a severe attack during the winter of 1915, his health improved and he was recommended for a commission in the Coldstream Guards. During the autumn of 1916 he suffered another attack, after which he was confined to a military hospital in London. Subsequently, he received a medical discharge from the army.

Feeling that he had a talent for music and wishing to study composition, he enrolled in 1917 in the Guildhall School of Music and studied with Orlando Morgan, of whom Orr says:

Orlando Morgan was an excellent teacher, but had no liking for contemporary music, and did not encourage any too chromatic attempts of mine, in
which he was quite right; though I didn't think so at the time, being only too ready to try and run before I could walk.\(^3\)

He always had a passion for German lieder, and the interpretations of the "incomparable" Elena Gerhardt increased this fondness. He asserts that his fondness for German song and the lieder renditions of Miss Gerhardt were the most important influences in his concentration of song composition,\(^4\) in which "he saw his musical métier."\(^5\) With the exception of his studies with Professor Morgan and a few lessons in counterpoint from Edward Dent, during the summer of 1919, Orr is practically self-taught.\(^6\)

Orr and Frederick Delius became good friends, and the former sent some manuscripts to Delius for his scrutiny and suggestions. Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock), who was staying with Delius in France at the time, came across the manuscripts and wrote to Orr concerning the compositions. He was impressed by the quality of some of the songs, and eventually was instrumental in having some of Orr's initial endeavors published.

The composer has supported himself from the royalties from his compositions, as an important critic for the *Music Review*, and, fortunately, through private means.\(^7\)

His indifferent health has forced him to spend most of his life in the Cotswolds, and he now resides with his wife in Painswick, near Stroud, only a few miles from his birthplace. A deafness, which distorts all sounds above a certain pitch, has put an end to his creative career.\(^8\)
He says:

... As to writing any more, I fear those days are over. With old age has come a most distressing form of deafness, which results in all musical sounds becoming quite distorted, with high notes either sounding sharp or quite inaudible. Being no Beethoven or Fauré I am not able to cope with this inability. I have to resign myself to music becoming a thing of the past so far as any participation in it is concerned.9

The composer is discouraged because his music is rarely performed in his native country. He indicates that last autumn the British Broadcasting Corporation gave twelve recitals of British song, including some twenty-three composers and at least one hundred songs—not a single song of his was included.10 The composer is justifiably disillusioned over the status of his music and fears that his compositions will eventually be overlooked by future generations, even more so than by the present one.11
FOOTNOTES


4. Ibid., p. 6.


II. CONCEPTS, INFLUENCES, AND MISCONCEPTIONS

Although Mr. Charles Wilfred Orr's vocal output is relatively small when compared to composers such as Wolf, Schubert, or Brahms, his works reflect intricate musicianship and master craftsmanship. There have been composers whose reputations rest upon the merits of fewer compositions than Orr's. Henri Duparc¹ and George Butterworth² are notable examples. Duparc composed most of his works within a period of ten years, after which he composed very little. Butterworth was tragically killed in 1916 while still a young man of thirty-one. As intimated, while the quantity of compositions is impressive, it is their quality which should be the more exacting criterion.

There are various reasons why his songs are not better known. One reason is that he has not enjoyed good health; indeed, he has suffered from indifferent health throughout his life.³ This alone could justify his relatively few compositions which span some thirty-six years.⁴ The recurring attacks, which plagued him for some forty years, curtailed his travel considerably.⁵ Thus, his entire life has been spent in the general vicinity of the Cotswolds, certainly non-conducive for becoming internationally known.
He has enjoyed little encouragement from music critics in general. Often they have either rendered subjective judgements or have taken segments, out of context, and incorrectly made assumptions, based on these false concepts. For instance, Mr. A. V. Butcher in an article on Housman and English composers refers to Orr's songs:

The voice . . . sometimes has melodic lines which are awkward to sing, e.g., the phrase "Let me mind the house" in "When I Watch the Living Meet" is sung to the notes D, G-flat, A-flat, A-flat, B, an augmented fifth and an augmented second in so short a phrase. . . .

This certainly is taken out of context, and the same accusation could be made of many great composers, based on this fragmented evidence.

Actually, Mr. Orr's melodic lines are extremely vocal, and Mr. Butcher obviously searched quite thoroughly to find an example which he could cite to suggest the contrary. In most cases, Orr's melodies are very singable; they are constructed from triadic structures and are often conjunct. He uses many chromatic passages, but these are certainly idiomatic for the vocal medium. Generally he avoids extreme registers; he has climactic sections which demand these registers, but, for the most part, his songs usually lie in the medium range of the respective voice for which he is composing. The melodies of most of his songs negate Mr. Butcher's suggestion, and an objective appraisal reveals Mr. Butcher's observation to be a highly subjective one, based not on a familiarity with Mr. Orr's compositions,
but, in fact, on an unfamiliarity with his music and philosophy in general. Mr. Orr, himself, says,

... You are quite right in thinking that my voice parts are conceived independently of the accompaniment, in that it is the voice part I have always tried to get fixed first of all, and then fitted the piano part to it in such a way as to leave the voice paramount, and not write like what has been described in connection with certain modern songwriters—piano parts with vocal accompaniment. ...

The melodies of his songs reveal this most clearly (see Figures 1-4).
Fig. 1. — C. W. Orr, "With Rue My Heart is Laden," composed in 1924, bars 1-21. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
sighing In the dark should sigh no more;

Fig. 2.—C. W. Orr, "On Your Midnight Pallet Lying," composed in 1925, bars 1-9. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Andante

Into my heart an air that kills From you far country blows:

Fig. 3.—C. W. Orr, "Into My Heart An Air That Kills," composed in 1935, bars 1-7. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.
Fig. 4.—C. W. Orr, "Requiem," composed in 1954, bars 1-12. Reprinted by permission of Western Music Company.

Unfortunately for Orr, his songs, rather than being appreciated for their uniqueness, have been compared to those of English composers who exhibit "Olde Englishe" style, i.e., lyricism and simplicity within the ballad type of writing. A. V. Butcher mentions that "Orr's harmonies are too extravagant, and one soon yearns for the simplicity of a Butterworth." The question arises, however—is the simplicity of a Butterworth always a propos to transmit the desired implication of the text?

The noted English composer, Edmund Rubbra, criticizes Orr's musical settings thusly:

Mr. Orr, judging by the number of his settings of Housman's poems, seems to be an ardent admirer of this poet. Yet I cannot help feeling that this
composer's natural idiom, compounded as it is of caressing Delius-like harmonies, is not a suitable vehicle for the starkly direct statements of the chosen poems. Perhaps Mr. Orr feels the nostalgia of the poems as the most important element, in which case his harmonic schemes would be more justified; but surely this nostalgia is the negative and not the positive element in Housman's poetry, and music that gets at the core of the thought, will it not be like the clear lines of chalk hills rather than the lush undergrowth of valley pastures? This may be a highly personal reaction; certainly the songs as such are distinguished, beautifully singable and playable, and full of opportunities for delicate rhythm and tone-colour.9

Rubbra obviously misses the point of Housman and also the same concept in Orr's interpretation. Housman, in a lecture of 1933 entitled "The Name and Nature of Poetry," stated that, for him, poetry was not thought, but emotion.10 Mr. B. J. Leggett mentions, "but in spite of his use of many of the devices of wit, Housman's poetic mode is more akin to the romantic tradition than to the modern."11 He also asserts: "one might go even further to suggest that Housman's conception of the nature of poetry was essentially Romantic...."12 The fact that Rubbra regards Housman as a "Classicist" and, consequently, repudiates Orr's many "Romantic" settings certainly did nothing to enhance the latter's reputation. Orr suggests:

He [Rubbra] takes the line, as do many critics, that because there is an overall simplicity in Housman's verses, this ought to be preserved in musical settings. There may be something in this, but simplicity in verse and in music are not quite the same thing; music should bring out the undertones, so to speak, of what the poet has said, and this simplicity may not always be possible or even desirable in musical settings. ...13
Leggett supports Orr's statement with a further appraisal of Housman's poetry:

First, one must consider seriously the matter of his infamous "simplicity" . . . his poetry is not entirely free from punning and a certain ambiguity of statement. It is characterized to a greater content by conceit, paradox, irony—in short, the qualities which have been viewed by much modern criticism as the marks of a necessary complexity in poetic texture. Added to these devices is a use of allusion that one might well call modern. Housman's allusive technique frequently serves to complicate the seemingly simple statement of a poem by echoing and reversing a commonplace expression or a passage from another work so that the resulting tone is a complex one . . . . It is the subtlety with which Housman employs these techniques that suggests a distinction between his poetry and that of the moderns. It may also help to account for the fact that his ironies have been mistaken for literal statement, his paradoxes for perversity, and his conceits for personal belief.14

John Sparrow, when speaking of Housman's verse, says, "it is in truth, as 'classical' in form as it is 'romantic' in feeling."15

It would appear, based on these scholarly observations, that Mr. Orr has ample justification for inserting "lush undergrowths" for "chalk hills" in some of his Housman settings.

The composer developed an early fondness for German lieder, especially those of Hugo Wolf, and his influence is evident in several of Orr's songs, "mainly . . . because the piano parts consist of a single figure running through­out, very much in Wolf's manner."16 S. S. Prawer notes the same quality in Wolf's lieder, remarking:

More than any other composer he respected his texts; every nuance, every inflection of their speech-melody, generally finds its counterpart in the vocal line of his
songs, while the accompaniments are usually built up out of one or two tiny phrases which are expanded and developed on symphonic principles.\(^{17}\)

The most striking influences are evident in "When I Watch the Living Meet," "Westward on the High-Hilled Plains," and "The Isle of Portland."\(^{18}\)

Another influence which manifests itself in his music was his friendship with Frederick Delius, an English composer with an international flavor to his music. During his life, Delius was more famous in Germany than in England. Concerning Delius's songs, Ralph Hill notes: "An important characteristic of Delius's style of songwriting is the way the melodic line and the harmonic background are so closely interwoven."\(^{19}\) Rey Longyear further observes: "His rich harmonic sense was influenced by Grieg . . . but his characteristic blend of lush chromatic harmony and static harmonic rhythm repels some listeners. . . ."\(^{20}\) Orr readily admits having been influenced by Delius, especially in his harmonic progressions,\(^{21}\) and has, consequently, been open to the same criticism made of Delius—his harmonies repel some listeners.\(^{22}\)

A good example of Delius's unexpected harmonic progressions and closely interwoven melodic-harmonic schema is found in his song "Black Roses." The initial figure, presented in the piano introduction, is repeated four more times in the composition; in bars 26-27 and 41-42 in the voice, bars 32-33 in the piano alone, and in the voice and piano parts in bars 45-46.\(^{23}\) The first phrase in the voice
part (bars 3-6) is reminiscent of the Dorian mode, transposed up one half-step. The composition begins with an unprepared seventh resolving to a g minor triad, followed by a B-flat triad. Bar 2 commences with an A\textsuperscript{7} chord (with a lowered fifth) progressing to a F\textsuperscript{7} chord (with a raised fifth and a lowered seventh). Bar 3 consists of an outlined c\textsuperscript{7} chord (with a lowered fifth) and a passing tone on beat four in the bass. Bar 4 is basically the same chordal structure (in a different inversion) with an accented lower neighbor in the vocal line on beat one. Bar 5 utilizes the same static harmony found in bars 3 and 4 with the root in the bass on beats one through three and a suspension (B-flat to A) in the upper piano part. Bar 6 consists of a diminished seventh sonority (realized on beat two) constructed on G progressing to a sonority built on fourths (A-flat, D-flat, G) with a lower neighbor in the bass. This particular progression could also be analyzed as A-flat\textsuperscript{7} chord with an escape tone, D-flat, progressing to the pedal B-flat in bar 7.
Fig. 5.—Frederick Delius, "Black Roses," bars 1-12. Note especially the opening fragment in piano, bars 1-2. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Fig. 6.—Frederick Delius, "Black Roses," bars 25-29. Observe melodic fragment in piano, bars 26-27. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
Fig. 7.—Frederick Delius, "Black Roses," bars 32-33. Note melodic fragment in piano. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Becoming always slower and more peaceful.

Fig. 8.—Frederick Delius, "Black Roses," bars 38-49. Note melodic fragment in voice, bars 41-42; in piano and voice, bars 45-46. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
The Delius trait which Orr seems to have emulated is the preoccupation of unexpected harmonic progressions. While the melodic line and harmonies are closely interwoven, as in Delius's works, the melodic line will not always in itself give evidence of the novel harmonic progressions which the composer implements.

Orr's affinity for lieder and the preponderance of certain non-English elements, which were incorporated into his musical style, had a negative effect in England. The combination of anti-Germanic feelings which existed in England after World War I and the Germanic lieder qualities of rich harmonic and contrapuntal design caused his music to be rejected by many of the English critics. His syncopated melodic line and often complex harmonic boldness repelled his compatriots who, instead, identified with the music of Arthur Sommervell, Graham Peel, Ivor Gurney, George Butterworth, and Ralph Vaughan Williams—composers who, for the most part, exhibited more of the English ballad style than did Orr.

Mr. Stephen Williams, writing in the *Evening Standard* of June 17, 1938, mentions having heard a program of "Shropshire Lad" settings by all of the previously mentioned composers, substituting the name of John Ireland for Graham Peel; he does not include Orr.25

The composer, realizing the status of his music in England, requested Housman to allow some of his poems, which had been set to music by Orr, to be translated into
German for publication by a German or Austrian firm. Orr's
dilemma was only compounded when Housman curtly refused.26

Orr varied from his favorite medium in only two com-
positions: "Midsummer Dance" for 'cello and piano and "A
Cotswold Hill-Tune" for string orchestra. Most of his songs
are settings of "A Shropshire Lad" and were written for the
male voice; consequently, female singers can perform little
of his repertoire.27 The fact that his output is not more
evenly balanced would tend to be a detriment, because few
composers in the twentieth century have made a name for
themselves solely as composers of song.

Another negative force is the obvious omission of
his name from many of the important biographical and musi-
cal dictionaries. Even after his significant song cycle
contribution of 1934, he received only token mention in
various publications. Eric Blom's Music in England, pub-
lished in 1942, contained only a brief reference;28
Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians did not include
a listing on the composer until the 1954 edition;29 the
British Music of Our Time of 1946 omitted his name alto-
gether;30 Denis Stevens's A History of Song includes only
two sentences;31 and James Hall's The Art Song omits his
name completely.32 Certainly, these omissions had a nega-
tive effect in the recognition of his competence as a com-
poser of songs.

With roots and concepts in the diatonic harmonic
practice, the composer may have irreparably severed relations
with avant-garde composers and sympathizers when he reviewed Humphrey Searle's Night Music thusly:

If to imitate discreetly
If to flatter most sincerely,
Such a score as this most neatly
Does all that's required, or nearly.
Whether it was worth your trouble
Wiser men than I must answer;
Whether it's mere froth and bubble,
Frankly, I don't give a darn, Sir!
Music that's atonal (very),
May be Heaven to some—or near it;
Let such folk rejoice, be merry;
All I know is--I CAN'T BEAR IT!

Misunderstood, often neglected, laboring in ill health with little encouragement for his creativity, Charles Wilfred Orr has, nevertheless, produced a creditable number of vocal gems, worthy of considerable praise.
FOOTNOTES

1 Duparc's compositions number twenty, including sixteen songs and a duet for soprano and tenor.

2 Butterworth's compositions include twenty-four songs and seven other numbers for various media.

3 Orr indicates, in a personal letter to the author of December 29, 1971, that the attacks have occurred throughout his life, most severely during the first forty years or so.

4 His earliest composition dates from 1921; his last was composed in 1957.


7 Orr, op. cit., p. 4.

8 Butcher, op. cit., p. 337.


11 Ibid., p. 132.  12 Ibid., p. 133.

13 Orr, op. cit., pp. 4-5.


16 Orr, op. cit., p. 4.

18 Orr's observation as included in personal letter, op. cit., p. 3.


21 Orr, op. cit., p. 4.

22 See Butcher, op. cit., p. 337.


24 Loc. cit.


26 Ibid., p. 254.

27 Only the Four Songs for High Voice, "In Valleys Green and Still," "Hymn Before Sleep," and "Tryste Noel," are textually appropriate for the female voice.


34 Copley, op. cit., p. 13.
III. A SURVEY OF ORR'S SONGS

Since Orr's deafness, a concomitance of old age, has apparently ended his creative career,¹ it is possible to look at his works as a completed whole. For lack of a better appellation, Orr's songs can be considered to be English lieder because, in the lieder tradition, every textual suggestion finds a corresponding nuance within the phrase and his songs are the paradigm of melodic-harmonic interplay. In lieder, Mr. Orr observes:

... there is often some crucial word or phrase on which the whole significance of the verse or even the whole poem depends. The composer will give this special prominence, either by prolongation of the vocal line or by some harmonic colour in the piano part. ...²

This concept pervades his songs, and an apotheosis of this is his setting of "Is My Team Ploughing?", at the phrase "I cheer a dead man's sweetheart":

![Musical notation](attachment:notation.png)
In his early works, he employs an extensive use of chromaticism; this tendency is refined somewhat in his more mature works and is replaced by a more economical use of chromaticism and restraint. Consequently, his lyrical melodic line, evident in even his early period, gradually becomes more subtle in his later works.3

Orr's first song to be published was "Plucking the Rushes," composed in 1921 and published in 1922. This song, a setting of a Chinese poem translated by Arthur Waley, has a piano accompaniment which bears a certain resemblance to those of Delius, as has been noted by Sidney Northcote: "'Plucking the Rushes' is a dainty song with a difficult but effective accompaniment showing some traces of the influence of Delius."4 The composition is for low voice, one which must sustain a high F-sharp. There are also two minor publishing errors which have been pointed out by the composer (see Appendix).
Fig. 10.—C. W. Orr, "Plucking the Rushes," bars 35-48. This early song shows Delius's influence particularly in the accompaniment. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.

The other song written in 1921 was "Silent Noon," a setting of Sonnet XIX from "The House of Life" by D. G. Rossetti. The most famous setting of this text is the one by Ralph Vaughan Williams which dates from 1903.5 Orr's lovely setting might also be classified as one which shows some of Delius's traits. Mr. Orr notes: "Certainly Delius influenced my harmonic style in that I have always liked rich harmonies—probably too much so."6
uses a quotation from Delius's *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring.*

![Fig. 11.—C. W. Orr, "Silent Noon," bars 9-12. Observe Delius quotation, bars 9-10. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.](image)

![Fig. 12.—Frederick Delius, On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring, melodic fragment, bars 3-7. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.](image)

Orr's first Housman settings are "'Tis Time, I Think, by Wenlock Town" in 1921, followed by "Loveliest of Trees" in 1922; both were later published in 1923 as *Two Songs from "A Shropshire Lad"*. The same searching for a confident musical style is evident, and Orr mentions that "'Tis Time . . ." was definitely too much influenced by Delius, not a bad melody but the piano part too Delian to be considered typical of my own style later on. . . ."

The other two songs composed in 1922 are "The Carpenter's Son" and "When the Lad for Longing Sighs." The
former is dedicated to Peter Warlock, the pseudonym of Philip Heseltine, who was one of Orr's chief enthusiasts. This song is a setting of a quite controversial poem alluding to Christ. Both compositions exhibit more restraint from the chromatic outpouring of the earlier songs and are in contrast with the earlier, excessively-chromatic, "experimental" style. "When the Lad . . . " also shows a certain affinity for the key of E Major, a key used with success in many of his lyrical settings. Of particular interest is the rhythmic Urkeim, with permutation, which pervades the entire composition:

Fig. 13.—C. W. Orr, "When the Lad for Longing Sighs." Rhythmic Urkeim and permutation.

Orr's next endeavor was "When I Was One-and-Twenty," composed in 1924. Northcote erroneously lists the date of composition as 1925. He is in error, however, as 1925 is the date of publication, not the date of composition. In this song Mr. Orr's English roots are more evident than in some of his other early works. The lyrical melodic line, the quasi-modalitly of the melody, and use of strophic verse are all qualities which are typically English. Astringent harmonies support the voice and add an impetus to the rhythmic flow. Traditionally, from the Baroque era, some type of variation is desirable in strophic settings. In
this instance, Mr. Orr reverts to his harmonic color for contrast, supporting rather than impeding the melodic flow (see Figure 14).
His other song of 1924 is one of his finest—"With Rue My Heart Is Laden."\(^{15}\) Orr uses the rhythmic figure \( \uparrow \uparrow \uparrow \uparrow \) taken from the opening utterance as a unifying device; this rhythmic pattern pervades the composition. The final postlude should include a low B in the last measure; the insertion of the bass clef sign results in a b minor chord rather than a G\(^7\), as it seems to indicate (see Appendix).

Fig. 15.—C. W. Orr, "With Rue My Heart Is Laden," bars 1-5. Note rhythmic pattern. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
During the years 1925-27 Orr wrote eight songs. A group of five songs written during this period was later published after World War II as a cycle of Five Songs from "A Shropshire Lad". The songs, originally published separately, are: "With Rue My Heart Is Laden," 1924; "This Time of Year," 1927; "Oh, When I Was in Love with You," 1926; "Is My Team Ploughing?", 1925; and "On Your Midnight Pallet Lying," 1925. This cycle for tenor contains some of Orr's best songs and fulfills all the necessary criteria for a cycle, should he have desired initially to publish these compositions as such. The keys of the songs are b minor, e minor, g minor, e minor, and d minor, respectively.

"With Rue . . ." has previously been suggested as one of his finest songs. "This Time of Year," the second of the set, contains modal harmony, especially conspicuous at cadences. Altered harmonic progressions lead to cadential
formulae such as C Major-B-flat Major-F\textsuperscript{11} (F natural, A, C-sharp, E-flat with a G in suspension, B-flat)-D Major progressions in bars 17-18; E Major-D Major-C Major-B Major in consecutive second inversion progressions in bars 27-28; and the tritonic melodic line, enriched by whole-tone harmony and superimposed parallel fifth progressions in bars 39-40 (see Figures 17-19).

\textit{Allegretto \textit{d} = 70}

Fig. 17.--C. W. Orr, "This Time of Year," bars 16-18. Note cadential formula, bars 17-18. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

\textit{Allegretto \textit{d} = 70}

lad that lives and has his will Is worth a dozen
Fig. 18.—C. W. Orr, "This Time of Year," bars 25-29. Note consecutive second inversion progressions in bars 27-28. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
Fig. 19.—C. W. Orr, "This Time of Year," bars 37-46. Note tritonic melodic line, bars 39-41, and parallel fifth progressions, bars 39-40. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

"Oh When . . . " is in modified strophic form; the second stanza implements intervallic variation and subtle, infrequent harmonic changes. The piano interlude and postlude are almost identical; the only changes between bars 8-11 and bars 20-23 occur in bar 23 where octave displacements and a changed chord in the last half of beat two imply a strong modal ending of E-flat\(^7\)-F\(^7\)Major-G Major.

Fig. 20.—C. W. Orr, "Oh, When I Was in Love with You," bars 10-12. First piano interlude. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
"Is My Team Ploughing?" is another gem; curiously, Housman also believed this poem to be his best. The initial melodic line is a mixture of Aeolian and Dorian modes. The first two verses are set in modified strophic form with antiphonal utterances by a ghost and his friend. This alternating question-answer approach governs the poem; initially, the ghost asks mundane questions concerning the status of things since his departure. The mood abruptly changes as the ghost asks: "Is my girl happy that I thought hard to leave, and has she tired of weeping as she lies down at eve?" Orr employs syncopated cross-rhythms between the voice and piano as the lad answers: "Ay, she
lies down lightly, she lies not down to weep: your girl is well contented, be still my lad, and sleep." The initial melodic figure is again used in a higher tessitura as the voice asks now about his friend: "Is my friend hearty ... and has he found to sleep in a better bed than mine?" The lad replies, "... I cheer a dead man's sweetheart, never ask me whose." The intensity of the song is retained by means of the reiteration of a low A in the piano, followed by an A Major seventh chord with a doubled fifth. The A7, unresolved at the conclusion of the number, is the dominant seventh of d minor, the key of the final song. "On Your Midnight Pallet Lying." (See Figure 22 for "Is My Team Ploughing?.")

![Musical notation](image-url)
The goal stands up, the keeper stands up, the lads play heart and soul. That is my girl happy. I thought hard to leave, and has she tired of weeping.

As she lies down at eve? Ay, she lies down lightly, she lies down lightly.
lies not down to weep: Your girl is well contented, Be

Tempo primo
Mezza voce pp

still, my lad, and sleep. "Is my friend hearty? Now

I am thin and pine. And has he found to sleep in A better bed than

mine?"

Yes, lad, I lie easy, I lie as lads would
Fig. 22.--C. W. Orr, "Is My Team Ploughing?". Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

This last song of the set also uses modified strophic form with a poignant melodic line, somewhat syncopated at times but highly singable. The metric changes are subtle, employing 4, 2, 4, and 4 metric signatures as every nuance of the text is exploited. Of interest is the harmonic complexity as illustrated in bars 1-6. The composition commences with a d minor center; there is an escape tone (E) in the upper voice and the progressions are d minor-a-minor-g minor, with an appoggiatura resulting in a delayed suspension in the bass. On the last beat of measure one, Orr uses an e diminished seventh chord with the G initially
omitted. He often omits the third in his chordal structures. In this instance, the G finally appears, but the structure then changes to a g minor sonority on the last half of beat four. Bars 4-5 are also harmonically interesting. In bar 4 there is the progression of an arpeggiated g ninth chord (omitting the third ninth with a non-harmonic C)-d minor-g minor-g⁷(appoggiatura C)-a minor-g minor-f-sharp⁷ (with a flatted seventh and the third omitted)-diminished g⁷ Bar 5 uses the harmonic movement of c-sharp⁷-A Major seventh, finally resolving to an a minor seventh chord in bar 6 (see Figure 23 for bars 1-6). The cycle comes to a final, though not completely tranquil, conclusion after a short piano epilogue.

```
Poco Lento j = 54
Voice

Piano
```

Listen and undo the door: Lads that waste the light in
The remaining songs composed during the period 1925-27 were all written in 1927: "Along the Field," "The Lent Lily," "The Earl of Bristol's Farewell," and "Tryste Noel." The first two use texts by Housman, while the latter two are settings of poems by John Digby and Louise Imogen Guiney, respectively. Both "Along the Field" and "The Lent Lily" were later incorporated into his most famous cycle, referred to as Seven Songs from "A Shropshire Lad", for baritone. These two songs will be mentioned later when this cycle is discussed.

"Tryste Noel" consists of a three-versed strophe with frequent parallel-fifth progressions in a model framework; the melodic line strongly implies the Aeolian mode. The piano part becomes successively more complex. "The Earl of Bristol's Farewell" uses a text actually written by the Earl of Bristol, John Digby (1580-1653), who was deprived of his knighthood and eventually died in exile. This song utilizes an incessant rhythmic pattern \[\text{\texttt{\textless\texttt{\textless\textless\textless\textless\textless}}}\]
in the piano accompaniment along with an extremely lyrical vocal melody.

![Musical notation](image)

Fig. 24.—C. W. Orr, "The Earl of Bristol's Farewell," bars 1-8. Note incessant rhythmic pattern in accompaniment. Reprinted by permission of Augener, Ltd.

The next year Orr composed three songs: "Soldier from the Wars Returning," "Whenas I Wake," and "Farewell
to Barn and Stack and Tree." The first of these three is a
dramatic setting for baritone, dedicated to two lieutenants
in the Coldstream Guards, the unit with which Mr. Orr
served in 1917. Orr reverts to his chromatic tendency,
especially in bars 21-30.
"Whenas I Wake," with a text by Patrick Hannay, has a striking melody in the middle register. A "germ" motive derived from the opening melodic phrase is evident throughout, even in the postlude where Orr effectively combines motivic sequences with expressive chromaticism. (The postlude contains permutations of the "original kernal".)
"Farewell to Barn . . .," dedicated to the famous composer Arnold Bax, will be discussed in the next section dealing with the famous cycle, *Seven Songs from "A Shropshire Lad"*. This cycle, according to various scholars, including Sidney Northcote and Christopher Le Fleming, is one of the outstanding contributions to English song since World War I. Although the cycle was not published until 1934, the component songs were written during the years 1927-31. The songs are: "Along the Field," "When I Watch the Living Meet," "The Lent Lily," "Farewell to Barn and Stack and Tree," "Oh Fair Enough Are Sky and Plain," "Hughley Steeple," and "When Smoke Stood Up from Ludlow."

Northcote indicates that these songs were written between 1927-32. However, this is erroneous, and three of his dates on these songs are also in error. "Along the Field" is set in strophic stanzas with slight variation,
buttressed by frequent duplet-triplet figures in the accompaniment. Copley asserts that "When I Watch the Living Meet" is a notable accomplishment and, were the same music attributed to Alban Berg, for example, this song would be in the standard repertoire of most European singers. Orr also believes it to be one of his best "Shropshire Lad" settings. The opening fragment is repeated in several sections, including the postlude. Observe the Urkeim in bars 36-38:

\[ \text{Fig. 27.--C. W. Orr, "When I Watch the Living Meet," bars 34-39. Urkeim, used at beginning of composition, found also in bars 36-38. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.} \]

Northcote believes this song reflects a strong influence of Wolf, and from the use of a small, unifying fragment, this aspect is evident (see Figure 27, bars 36-38).
"The Lent Lily" is more notable for its virtuostic piano accompaniment than for its vocal prowess. The technical facility required of the pianist is considerable.

Fig. 28.--C. W. Orr, "The Lent Lily," bars 17-22. Virtuostic piano accompaniment. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.

The fourth song of the cycle, "Farewell . . .", is a dramatic utterance which demands a baritone with more than average vocal ability. On three occasions the voice rises
to a high F. The poem depicts a young man who has murdered his only brother. Consequently, he is fleeing his farm with the thought of never returning. This is one of Orr's most dramatic settings.

The fifth song, composed in 1931, is “Oh Fair Enough Are Sky and Plain.” Held together by a syncopated-arpeggiated accompaniment, this song again demonstrates the lieder concept that the piano is no mere accompaniment.
The sixth and seventh songs, "Hughley Steeple," and "When Smoke Stood Up from Ludlow," are in the keys of F Major and E Major, respectively. E Major has earlier been mentioned as a favorite key (see p. 30), and he uses one flat as a key center for: "The Lent Lily," "Oh Fair Enough Are Sky and Plain," "Into My Heart an Air That Kills," "Hughley Steeple," "On Your Midnight Pallet Lying," and "When I Was One-and-Twenty." All of these indicate one flat; the latter three are written in the relative minor while the others are in F Major. The sixth and seventh songs of this cycle also offer a study in contrast in the areas of key, tempo, and structure. The sixth song is 6 Poco animato, 8 meter, and is a biparte form; the last song of the cycle is in E Major, 26 Allegretto vivace ( \( \text{j} = 66 \)), 2 4 meter, and is in triparte form.

Although the famous cycle for baritone was Orr's outstanding achievement in the years 1927-31, another fine
composition emerged in 1932—"Bahnhofstrasse." This is a setting of a James Joyce poem and was included in a commemorative edition to the poet. Orr comments:

Herbert Hughes, an Irish critic and composer, arranged to have a kind of compendium of songs to celebrate James Joyce's birthday (or something of the sort) and asked some thirteen English songwriters to contribute one setting each of Joyce's "Poemes Penyeach," a volume of verses written when he was a young man. Each composer was given a poem, mine being the "Bahnhofstrasse"...

This particular song has an ostinato figure which pedals on G. The ostinato depicts the trudging on the way in a type of "tone painting."

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Voice} & \quad \text{The eyes that mock me sign the way Where-to I pass at simile} \\
\text{Piano} & \quad \text{eve of day, Grey way whose violet signals are The}
\end{align*}
\]
"The Lads in Their Hundreds" was composed in 1936 and dedicated to Sidney Northcote. Orr's harmonic sense is greatly restrained in this song, and the melodic line has a folk-song quality. Written for tenor, this piece requires a certain vocal prowess because the range extends to a high A.

Three songs, written between 1935 and 1939, were published in 1940 as a cycle of Three Songs from "A Shropshire Lad" for tenor voice and piano. This album is dedicated to the famous pianist-accompanist, Gerald Moore. The first of the set, "Into My Heart an Air That Kills," opens with an unprepared 9-8 suspension in the piano in bar 1, whereas a prepared one in bar 19 (see Figure 3). The syncopated, lyrical melody is extremely vocal, and the intricate interplay of vocal and piano lines is delicately interwoven. The piano postlude terminates the composition.

The second of the set, "Westward on the High-Hilled Plains," is quite dramatic, as the second section indicates:
Fig. 31.—C. W. Orr, "Westward on the High-Hilled Plains," bars 20-29. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.

Once again, the piano epilogue is an integral and effective part of the composition.
Fig. 32.—C. W. Orr, "Westward on the High-Hilled Plains," bars 64-77. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.

"Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers," written in 1939, is the finale of this album. There are frequent key shifts and metric changes utilizing $6\ 9\ 3\ 4$ signatures; the song climaxes and terminates with the voice on a high G-sharp, the third of the E Major center (see Figures 33-36).
gold cup flowers are lying in field and lane, with dandelions to

Fig. 33.—C. W. Orr, "Oh See How Thick . . . ," bars 1-11. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.

Vivace non troppo  \( \ddot{z} = 54 \)

... bars and lad, Tis now the blood runs gold, And man and maid had

... be glad Before the world is
Fig. 34.—C. W. Orr, "Oh See How Thick . . . ," bars 27-37. Note metric changes, bars, 32-34. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.

**Some lads there are,**
'tis shame to say,
That only court to thieve,
And

Fig. 35.—C. W. Orr, "Oh See How Thick . . . ," bars 48-55. Note frequent metric changes in bars 48, 51, and 52. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.
Not to be overlooked is a song composed in 1938, "The Isle of Portland." Written for baritone, it uses frequent enharmonic spellings to modulate between E-flat Major and D Major. Orr modulates between the two keys by inserting a D-flat in the harmony; enharmonically, this becomes the third of the dominant seventh of D, and the modulation is therefore accomplished (see bars 4-5 of the following example).
Fig. 37.—C. W. Orr, "The Isle of Portland, bars 1-10. Note key change, bars 4-5 with enharmonic spelling. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.
A period of some thirteen years transpires between 1939, the date of "Oh See How Thick . . .," and 1952, the compositional date of his next song, "In Valleys Green and Still." This text is taken from Housman's "Last Poems" and reveals, according to Copley, a subtler melodic line with "the elegiac harmonies more disciplined." Written for high voice, it is dedicated to Dr. P. M. H. Edwards, the Canadian composer-scholar who has already been mentioned several times in the course of this paper. Note the extensive piano epilogue with reiterated thirty-second note figures.
Orr's remaining five songs were written in 1954-57, using poems by Helen Waddell, Thomas Hood, and Robert Bridges. In 1953 Orr set two poems by Helen Waddell, "Hymn before Sleep," and "While Summer On Is Stealing." Both settings are for low voice. The composer suggests that both the F-sharp in bar 66 and the G in bar 73 should be omitted, and the rhythm should be changed in the vocal line of bars 17-18 (see Appendix).
Fig. 40.—C. W. Orr, "Hymn before Sleep," bars 64–76. Original version. Notes to be omitted are found in bars 66 and 73. Reprinted by permission of Western Music Company, Ltd.

Fig. 41.—C. W. Orr, "Hymn before Sleep," corrected version, bars 66 and 73. Reprinted by permission of the composer.
The second of the Waddell settings reveals a certain refinement in chromatic usage. The third measure from the end of the composition should have an inserted bass clef in the piano part. This will result in a diminished seventh chord, resolving to a final D Major triad.

![Musical notation](image)

Fig. 42.—C. W. Orr, "While Summer On Is Stealing," bars 40-42. Correction shown in bar 40. Reprinted by permission of Western Music Company, Ltd.

The three remaining vocal opera were grouped with the earlier-written "Bahnhofstrasse" and issued in 1959 as an album of Four Songs for High Voice. The songs are: "Requiem," written in 1954; "The Time of Roses," 1955; and "Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest," 1957. The first of these final compositions is a setting of several verses of Prudentius's "Hymnus circa Exsequias Defuncti," translated by Helen Waddell. It is dedicated to Christopher Le Fleming, who wrote about Orr in the English periodical, Chesterian. This triparte composition prompted Philip Barford to observe:

Sometimes it happens that a highly refined, imaginative mind, which yet dwells at a level of
competence rather than genius, nevertheless produces a few choice flowers. Here in one. By any standards, this "Requiem" is a lovely song.\textsuperscript{33}

The composer has written an alternative version of bars 81 and 82, indicating his reasons for this change:

As regards the alternative version in bars 81/2 in "Requiem," I came to the conclusion that the D natural in the piano part sounded a bit unpleasant against the D-flat in the voice part, and so suggest this alternative...\textsuperscript{34}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure43.png}
\caption{C. W. Orr, "Requiem," bars 81-88. Original version. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.}
\end{figure}
"The Time of Roses," with a text by Thomas Hood, is characteristic of Orr's idiomatic writing and evokes little comment. However, his final composition, "Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest," is a notable accomplishment for any composer. Using his compositional language—syncopated melodic lines with unusual syllabic stress, cross-rhythm between the voice and piano, and frequently changing metric signature—Orr constructs a song which is musically interesting and vocally demanding, especially on the last page. The highest note encountered in any of his songs, a high B-flat, is found in this, his last song. This occurs on the word "God," a type of "tone painting" in itself. Note again the characteristic "Orrian" postlude.
Fig. 45.—C. W. Orr, "Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest," bars 34-46. Note high B-flat in bar 35, and typical "Orrian" postlude, bars 42-46. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

The following table contains pertinent information on Orr's complete vocal opera with reference to compositional dates, voice ranges of the songs, and publishers of the various selections.
TABLE 1

SONGS BY C. W. ORR

Miscellaneous Songs

For High Voice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album of Four Songs</th>
<th>Oxford University Press</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Bahnhofstrasse</td>
<td>E to G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(James Joyce)</td>
<td>(1932)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Requiem</td>
<td>E-flat to A-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Helen Waddell)</td>
<td>(1954)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest</td>
<td>D to B-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Robert Bridges)</td>
<td>(1957)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) The Time of Roses</td>
<td>D-sharp to G-sharp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Thomas Hood)</td>
<td>(1955)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tryste Noel*</td>
<td>C to G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Imogen Guiney)</td>
<td>(1927)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Medium Voice

| The Earl of Bristol's Farewell* | C-sharp to E |
| (John Digby)                   | (1927)       |
| Whenas I Wake*                 | E to E       |
| (Patrick Hannay)               | (1928)       |
| Plucking the Rushes            | B to F-sharp |
| (Arthur Waley)                 | (1921)       |
| Silent Noon                    | J. & W. Chester |
| (D. G. Rossetti)               | D to E-sharp |
| (1921)                         | J. & W. Chester |
| While Summer On Is Stealing    | D to E       |
| (Helen Waddell)                | Western Music Co. |
| Hymn before Sleep              | B to E       |
| (Helen Waddell)                | Western Music Co. |

Settings of A. E. Housman

For High Voice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Songs</th>
<th>J. &amp; W. Chester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Loveliest of Trees</td>
<td>D-flat to F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1922)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 'Tis Time, I Think, by Wenlock Town</td>
<td>E to F-sharp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1921)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Originally published by Augener; copies are now obtainable from the composer.
### TABLE 1—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three Songs</th>
<th>J. &amp; W. Chester</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Into My Heart an Air That C to F</td>
<td>(published 1940)</td>
<td>C to F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kills</td>
<td></td>
<td>J. &amp; W. Chester</td>
<td>1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Westward on the High-Hilled Plains</td>
<td></td>
<td>C-sharp to A</td>
<td>1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers</td>
<td></td>
<td>C to G-sharp</td>
<td>1939</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album of Five Songs</th>
<th>Oxford University Press</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) With Rue My Heart Is Laden D to F-sharp</td>
<td>(published 1934)</td>
<td>D to F-sharp</td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) This Time of Year D to F-sharp</td>
<td></td>
<td>D to F</td>
<td>1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Oh, When I Was in Love with You D to G</td>
<td></td>
<td>D to G</td>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Is My Team Ploughing? D to G</td>
<td></td>
<td>D to G</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) On Your Midnight Pallet Lying D to G</td>
<td></td>
<td>D to G</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Carpenter's Son</th>
<th>J. &amp; W. Chester</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When I Was One-and-Twenty</td>
<td></td>
<td>D to G</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the Lad for Longing Sighs</td>
<td></td>
<td>D to G-sharp</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lads in Their Hundreds</td>
<td></td>
<td>C to A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Valleys Green and Still B-flat to G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Medium Voice

### Album of Seven Songs (published as cycle, 1934)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>J. &amp; W. Chester</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Along the Field B to E</td>
<td>(published 1934)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) When I Watch the Living Meet C-flat to F</td>
<td></td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) The Lent Lily C to F</td>
<td></td>
<td>1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Farewell to Barn and Stack B-flat to F</td>
<td></td>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Tree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Oh Fair Enough Are Sky and Plain C to E-sharp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hughley Steeple B-flat to F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) When Smoke Stood Up from Ludlow B to E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) The Isle of Portland B-flat to E</td>
<td>J. &amp; W. Chester</td>
<td>1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldier from the Wars Returning</td>
<td>Stainer &amp; Bell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stainer &amp; Bell</td>
<td></td>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Remembered Spring" was the title first given to "'Tis Time, I Think, by Wenlock Town"; "Loveliest of Trees" was initially called "The Cherry Tree." The titles were changed prior to publication.36 There were also two other songs that the composer destroyed: an early setting of "Is My Team Ploughing?", and "If Truth in Hearts That Perish." He tore these up at the recommendation of Peter Warlock.37
FOOTNOTES


3 Copley, op. cit., p. 13.


8 Northcote, op. cit., p. 358.

9 Orr, op. cit., p. 4.

10 Copley, op. cit., p. 12.

11 Housman was a deist at eighteen and an atheist shortly thereafter. This poem evoked quite a response from the followers of Christianity.

12 Orr uses this key in "When Smoke Stood Up from Ludlow," "The Earl of Bristol's Farewell," "Whenas I Wake," "Oh See How Thick," "Silent Noon," and the middle section of "Oh Fair Enough Are Sky and Plain."

13 Northcote, op. cit., p. 357.

14 Orr, op. cit., p. 7.

15 Northcote, op. cit., p. 356.

16 See Northcote, loc. cit.

IV. HOUSMAN SETTINGS

When Alfred Edward Housman published his first collection of poetry, "A Shropshire Lad," in 1896, he supplied musicians with a source of poems which has inspired innumerable musical settings. Additional volumes, especially the "Last Poems" of 1922, enhanced his popularity and, reciprocally, provided musicians with more texts for songs. What made many English composers desire to set Housman's poetry is speculative, especially in light of his many disagreements with composers who wished to do so.\(^1\) Michael Kennedy suggests that, paradoxically, one of the reasons was the innate musicality of the poetry;\(^2\) other appealing qualities were "their phrases of eloquent beauties of the English countryside,"\(^3\) and the fact that they were very English.\(^4\)

C. W. Orr, the most prolific composer of Housman settings,\(^5\) indicates the poetic qualities which made Housman's verses so personally appealing: "He . . . wrote verse that was (a) beautiful, (b) scanned, (c) rhymed, and (d) made sense; qualities that so far as I can see are very much to seek in present day poets (?)".\(^6\) He adds: "... He is, I think, to English songwriters very much what Heine
was to German and Verlaine to French composers, without
alas! having met his English Schumann or Fauré. . . . 
Arthur Sommervell must have been among the first to
set Housman's poetry with a cycle dating from 1904. Its
first performance in 1905 pre-dates Ralph Vaughan
Williams's "Is My Team Ploughing?", which was composed in
1908. His famous cycle, On Wenlock Edge for tenor, string
quartet and piano, was first performed in 1909. There is
also a piano version, and an adaptation for orchestra which
dates from 1924.

Graham Peel's Songs of "A Shropshire Lad" dates from
1911. John Ireland's "The Heart's Desire" was written in
1917 or earlier, and his Land of Lost Content, a cycle of
six songs, was composed during the years 1920-1921. Charles Wilfred Orr set his first Housman poem in 1921. He eventually set twenty-four of the poet's poems to music. Ivor Gurney's Housman contributions, Ludlow and Teme and the Western Playland, were composed in 1924 and 1926
respectively. Arnold Bax's settings date from 1926, the
date of "In the Morning," from Housman's "Last Poems."

As indicated, Orr has set more Housman poems than
any other known composer. Other composers, in order of
their number of Housman settings are: Vaughan Williams
and Gurney with fourteen, Butterworth with twelve, Ireland
with eleven, Sommervell with ten, E. J. Moeran with seven,
and Graham Peel with six.
Vaughan Williams has done much to make Housman's verses known with his two famous cycles, the aforementioned On Wenlock Edge and Along the Field, eight songs for voice and violin utilizing texts from both "A Shropshire Lad" and "Last Poems." This cycle for high voice, originally unpublished, was first performed in 1927. It was published in 1954.

Vaughan Williams and Housman were in disagreement over On Wenlock Edge, specifically on two points. First, Vaughan Williams wanted to print the words to the Housman poetry on the concert program; Housman finally relented and allowed him to do so. Secondly, the poet was terribly perturbed because Vaughan Williams omitted the second stanza of "Is My Team Ploughing?" in his musical setting. When Grant Richards was compiling his book on Housman, a friend asked the composer if the correspondence might be printed. The composer retorted:

You may print anything you like. If the biographer consents I think I ought to be allowed my say, which is that the composer has a perfect right artistically to set any portion of a poem he chooses provided he does not actually alter the sense. . . . I also feel that a poet should be grateful to anyone who fails to perpetuate such lines as:

"The goal stands, up, the keeper
Stands up to keep the goal."^18

Consequently, Housman admonished in a letter of May 7, 1927: "As to 'Is My Team Ploughing?' Mr. Orr must be warned not to omit part of the poem, as I am told Vaughan Williams did."^19 Orr respected his wishes, as other composers, including Butterworth, had done earlier.^20
A composer who, according to many, represents the epitome of the spirit of Housman is George Butterworth. Michael Kennedy says that "Butterworth's settings are probably the nearest of all..." A. V. Butcher refers to "the simplicity of... Butterworth" when mentioning various Housman settings. Butterworth's musical language is embedded in the folk-song idiom and this reflects a certain simplicity in itself; also, his folk-song approach lends itself to many of the Housman settings, such as "Loveliest of Trees," "Bredon Hill," and "When I Was One-and-Twenty." It would appear, however, that complicated verse such as "Is My Team Ploughing?" might well be more effectively set in non-strophic stanzas. Vaughan Williams and Orr both do this, while Butterworth is content to set this poem of changing moods and increasing intensity in a hymn-like setting.

Although the American composer, John Duke, has not set Housman extensively, his setting of "Loveliest of Trees" is a song of rare felicity and beauty, beautifully portraying the air of youth as the cherry is observed, "hung with snow."

\begin{music}
\noptname\fff{Allegretto}
\noptname\fff{pp}
\noptname\fff{About the woodlands I will go To}
\end{music}
Fig. 46.—John Duke, "Loveliest of Trees," bars 55-71. Reprinted by permission of G. Schirmer.

The "Loveliest . . ." text has proven to be the most popular choice for musical settings. Other composers who
have also set this poem are: Ivor Gurney, Celius Dougherty, E. J. Moeran, Peel, Leslie Woodgate, Sommervell, Willie Manson, Butterworth, and Orr; the latter two composers' settings are extremely lyrical.

![Music notation]

Fig. 47.—George Butterworth, "Loveliest of Trees," bars 1-10. Reprinted by permission of Augener, Limited.
The following table of known settings indicates the popularity of the Housman poetry with musicians; dates are listed when known.
TABLE 2
HOUSMAN SETTINGS

Barber, Samuel, "With Rue My Heart Is Laden." New York, G. Shirmer, Inc. ("ASL" LIV)*

Bax, Arnold, "In the Morning." London, Murdoch, Murdoch & Co. ("Last Poems" XXIII), 1926.


Douglas, Keith, "Yonder See the Morning Blink." Unpublished ("LP" XI).


*"ASL" and "LP" stand for "A Shropshire Lad" and "Last Poems."
### Table 2—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poet/Composer</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher/Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herbert, Muriel</td>
<td>&quot;Loveliest of Trees.&quot;</td>
<td>London, Augener (&quot;ASL&quot; II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland, John</td>
<td>&quot;Hawthorn Time.&quot;</td>
<td>London, Winthrop Rogers, Ltd. (&quot;ASL&quot; XXXIX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;The Heart's Desire.&quot;</td>
<td>London, Winthrop Rogers, Ltd. (&quot;ASL&quot; X, omitting first two stanzas), 1917 or earlier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We'll to the Woods No More.</td>
<td>&quot;We'll to the Woods No More,&quot; &quot;In Boyhood,&quot; &quot;Spring Will Not Wait.&quot; (&quot;LP&quot; Prefatory Verse, XXXII, XVI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Ora Agatha</td>
<td>&quot;When I Was One-and-Twenty.&quot;</td>
<td>Los Angeles, R. W. Heffelfinger (&quot;ASL&quot; XIII), 1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambert, Frank</td>
<td>&quot;The Street Sounds to the Soldiers' Tread.&quot;</td>
<td>London, Stainer and Bell (&quot;ASL&quot; XXII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ley, Henry G.</td>
<td>&quot;White in the Moon,&quot; &quot;Far in a Western Brookland.&quot;</td>
<td>London, Stainer and Bell (&quot;ASL&quot; XXXVI, LII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manney, Charles Fonteyn</td>
<td>A Shropshire Lad, Oliver Ditson Co., 1914.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Loveliest of Trees.&quot;</td>
<td>London, Boosey and Hawkes (&quot;ASL&quot; II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'Tis Time, I Think, by Wenlock Town,&quot; &quot;Far in a Western Brookland.&quot;</td>
<td>London, Winthrop Rogers (&quot;ASL&quot; XXXIX, LII), 1927.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 2—Continued


, "Loveliest of Trees," "'Tis Time, I Think, by Wenlock Town," published as Two Songs from "A Shropshire Lad". London, J. and W. Chester ("ASL" II, XXXIX), 1922, 1921, respectively; published together in 1923.


, "In Valleys Green and Still." Toronto, Leslie Music Corp. (Western, Ltd.) ("LP" VII), 1952.


Priestley-Smith, Hugh, From the West Country. London, Joseph Williams, Ltd. ("ASL" XXXII, XXXIV, XL, XLIX).
TABLE 2—Continued


Vaughan Williams, Ralph, On Wenlock Edge, a cycle of six songs for tenor and piano (or piano and string quartet). "On Wenlock Edge," "From Far, from Eve and Morning," "Is My Team Ploughing?". "Oh, When I Was in Love with You," "Bredon Hill," "Clun." London, Boosey and Hawkes ("ASL" XXXI, XXXII, XXVII, XVIII, XXI, L), published as a cycle in 1911; compositional dates are from 1908.

______, "Along the Field as We Came By," "With Rue My Heart is Laden." Originally unpublished ("ASL" XXVI, LI).


These last eight songs were composed in 1924; eventually, they were published as a cycle for high voice, Along the Field (with violin obbligato), London, Boosey and Hawkes, 1954.


Young, Dalhousie, "Bredon Hill." London, Chappel and Co. ("ASL" XXI).
FOOTNOTES


2 Ibid., p. 116.


4 Loc. cit.


7 Ibid., p. 5.

8 Kennedy, op. cit., p. 513.


10 Loc. cit.


12 Orr, op. cit., p. 7.


15 This cycle dates from 1925. See Dickinson, op. cit., p. 523.
16 Kennedy, op. cit., p. 514.

17 Ibid., p. 438.


19 Ibid., p. 221.

20 He earlier set all the verses to the poem in 1911.


22 Butcher, op. cit., p. 337.


24 William White in "A. E. Housman and Music," op. cit., pp. 213-214 indicates that a list of all the various settings has never been published in its entirety. This list is based on his, with additional information concerning composers, works and dates achieved through research and various sources. Supplementary material is included from various volumes of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, BBC Music Catalog, acquisition of scores from C. W. Orr, various periodical sources, communication with publishers, including: Blackwell's; G. Schirmer; Brodt, agent for Chester; Oxford University Press; Leslie Music Company and agent, Western Music Company; Boosey and Hawkes; Joseph Patelson; and repertoire from the author's library.
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Even a cursory perusal of the vocal scores of Charles Wilfred Orr reveals that he is no ordinary English ballad writer. His songs represent the apogee of a hybrid form resulting from indissoluble qualities of the German lied and the English Art Song. His provocative harmonies, reminiscent of Delius, have evoked invective censures from some English critics. Only in recent years have certain scholars and musicians propagated the cogent, intrinsic merits of his songs. Dr. P. M. H. Edwards believes that Orr is one of the two most savagely neglected English composers of the twentieth century.¹

His melodic gift has English roots, notably in its lyricism and modality—qualities that can be traced back to Dunstable. There are intimations of Vaughan Williams's influence, particularly in Orr's use of modality;² but most twentieth-century English composers have at least inadvertently been influenced by this great master.

He is fond of using descending melodic lines at cadences and of preceding the final note of a cadential melodic formula with an interval that is chromatic with the final note. Observe the following examples:
Fig. 49.—C. W. Orr, "Hymn before Sleep," bars 1-11. Note the chromatic cadence, bars 8-9. Reprinted by permission of Western Music Company.
Fig. 50.—C. W. Orr, "While Summer On Is Stealing," bars 36-42. Note Chromatic cadence, bars 37-38. Reprinted by permission of Western Music Company.
Fig. 51.—C. W. Orr, "The Lent Lily," bars 1-6. Note cadence, bars 4-5. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.
I am thin and pine, And has he found to sleep in A better bed than mine?"

Yes, lad, I lie easy, I lie as lads would

Fig. 52. -- C. W. Orr, "Is My Team Ploughing?", bars 58-67. Note chromatic cadence in bars 62-63. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
Fig. 53.—C. W. Orr, "On Your Midnight Pallet Lying," bars 28-35. Note chromatic cadence, bars 30-31. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Fig. 54.—C. W. Orr, "Requiem," bars 1-12. Note the falling melodic line in bars 7-8 and 11-12. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
Fig. 55.—C. W. Orr, "Requiem," bars 35-40. Melodic cadence utilizing suspended figure. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Fig. 56.—C. W. Orr, "When I Watch the Living Meet," bars 25-27. Descending melodic cadence. Reprinted by permission of J. and W. Chester.
Fig. 57.--C. W. Orr, "The Time of Roses," bars 1-6. Note the chromatic approach to the cadence in bars 4-5. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Fig. 58.--C. W. Orr, "The Time of Roses," bars 21-25. Note the chromatic melodic formulae in bars 22-23 and bars 24-25. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
Melodically speaking, Mr. Orr twice uses the same ascending minor third to end two compositions in the cycle, *Five Songs from "A Shropshire Lad"*—"With Rue . . ." and "This Time of Year." The ending of the former song prompted Philip Heseltine to say that it was "one of the loveliest songs any English composer has written—it is perfectly beautiful, especially the last line—the emotion of 'where roses fade' could not be more completely realised or more perfectly expressed."  

See bars 35-37 of the following example:

![Musical notation](image)

*Fig. 59.*—C. W. Orr, "With Rue My Heart Is Laden," bars 32-42. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
Fig. 60.—C. W. Orr, "This Time of Year," bars 40-46. Note ascending minor third in bars 40-41. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

The melodic range of the songs for high voice extends almost two octaves, from C to B-flat; the highest note occurs in his last composition, "Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest," while the lowest note written for high voice is found in "Into My Heart An Air That Kills" and "Tryste Noel." Of the songs for high voice, the one which requires the widest range is "The Lads in Their Hundreds."

Of the songs written for medium voice, the highest note, F-sharp, is found in "Plucking the Rushes." A high F (or E-sharp) is required for "When I Watch the Living Meet," "Farewell to Barn and Stack and Tree," "Oh Fair Enough Are Sky and Plain," and "Hughley Steeple." Several
other songs written for medium voice require high E's. The lowest note required is a low A, necessary for "Soldier from the Wars Returning." (For a complete list, see Table 1.) The average ranges, based on a compilation of all of his songs, is B-flat to E for songs written for medium voice and D to G for the compositions for high voice.

His melodies reflect a sensitive approach to the implications of the text, and he often uses a type of "tone painting." Since the harmonic and melodic interplay is so closely interwoven in the music of Orr, the resulting "tone painting" is a result of melodic and harmonic combination. Interesting examples can be found in the phrase, "by God, thy master that made thee," from "Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest," and at the conclusion of "Is My Team Ploughing?", commencing with the phrase "I cheer a dead man's sweetheart." (See the following figures; also see Figure 9.)
Fig. 61.—C. W. Orr, "Since Thou, O Fondest and Truest," bars 34-38. Note that the word "God" is the highest in the phrase. It is also the highest vocal pitch required by Orr in all of his vocal opera. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Fig. 62.—C. W. Orr, "Is My Team Ploughing?", bars 69-78. This is an example of melodic-harmonic "tone painting." Note the final question is never answered, depicted by the use of an unresolved seventh chord at the conclusion. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
Orr's harmonic practice, patterned after Delius, is not representative of the typical English composers of his era but more indicative of the German tradition. While the melodic line often appears capable of standing alone, independent of the harmony, Orr's chromatic harmonic-melodic language introduces unanticipated vertical sonorities, often adding a thickness of texture which is not always perceptible when observing solely the melody. (See also Chapter II, Figures 1-4.)

![Musical notation](Fig. 63.—C. W. Orr, "With Rue My Heart Is Laden," bars 1-5. Note harmony. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.)

At times, the melodic cadential formulae produce unexpected harmonic sonorities, enriched by either whole-tone or modal inferences; his closely knit harmonic-melodic consciousness is evident, and alterations in the harmony likewise alter the melody. (See p.20 and pp. 34-37 for discussion and examples.)
Fig. 64.—C. W. Orr, "This Time of Year," bars 25-36. Note cadences, bars 27-28 and 33-34. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
By using the lowered seventh at cadences, Orr intimates a "modal" flavor, since the lowered seven is nearly always a necessary ingredient in modal writing. Although most of his compositions cannot be classified as belonging to any specific mode, his use of the lowered seven is a favorite harmonic practice. (See also pp. 36-38.)

*Allegretto* $\text{j} = 70$

![Musical notation](image)

Fig. 65.—C. W. Orr, "This Time of Year," bars 40-46. Note lowered sevenths, bars 40, 41, 42, and 43. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Orr's music is filled with seventh and ninth chords. Following the romantic and modern traditions, he does not concern himself with their resolution; rather, he uses them for their sonorous timbres. "Bahnhofstrasse," for example (see Figure 66), extensively uses seventh and ninth structures, with many parallel fifth, seventh, and ninth
progressions, depending upon harmonic interpretation. For instance, the first entity in bar 12 could be considered an $a^7$ chord, omitting the third, with a pedal on G and D and a suspended ninth, A, in the piano part; it could also be interpreted as $C^9$ in second inversion, omitting the seventh. Orr admits to having always liked rich sonorities. This concept pervades his compositions.
Many other examples of his harmonic boldness can be cited, including a fondness for seventh and ninth chords in inversion. A ninth chord in second inversion is noted in bar two, beat two, of "Bahnhofstrasse" (see previous example). Bars five and six of "With Rue . . ." contain a ninth chord in first inversion, progressing to a c⁷, with an accented lower neighbor (F-sharp).
"On Your Midnight Pallet Lying" also uses seventh chords, in third inversion, notably at bar 5.

Fig. 67.--C. W. Orr, "With Rue My Heart Is Laden," bars 1-9. Note ninth chord in bar 5. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

Fig. 68.--C. W. Orr, "On Your Midnight Pallet Lying," bars 4-9. Note seventh chord in bar 5. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.
Moderato \( \text{d} = \text{es} \)

"Fare-well to barn and ten.

stack and tree, Fare-well to Severn shore.

Terence, look your last at me, For I come home no more..."
I thought hard, to leave,
As she lies down at eve weep ing

In "The Lent Lily," Orr modulates from F Major to 
c-flat minor by letting the fifth of the F Major scale, C, 
become the sixth of the e minor one. The c⁷ chord (bar 17)
anticipates the e minor tonality, and the lowered F in bar 22 leads back into F Major in bar 23.
The cadential formulae alluded to earlier (see pp. 87-94) also is a device used for modulations.
There is another general tendency which bears noting. Mr. Orr has an affinity for syncopated rhythmic figures, primarily implemented in the accompaniment. This trend is evident throughout his compositional career. (See also previous example, Figure 74.)
Fig. 75.—C. W. Orr, "Requiem," bars 79-94. Note the undulating, syncopated accompaniment. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

poco più animato (tempo primo, \( j = 48 \))

Behind the drum and life, Past hawthorn wood and hollow,

Tempo I

rall. a tempo

Through earth and out of life The soldiers follow.

più animato

The soldiers is the trade:
Fig. 76.—C. W. Orr, "In Valleys Green and Still," bars 8-19. Note syncopated accompaniment. Reprinted by permission of Western Music Company.
As for formal design, the most preferred form for the songs is strophic or modified strophic. This form is used for fifteen of his thirty-five songs; ternary form is the next most preferred with thirteen compositions utilizing this structure. Other forms that are used are through composed (five) and binary (two).

As has been noted, his preoccupation with rich sonorities and his admiration for the music of Delius and Wolf account somewhat for the numerous lieder traits which are discernible. It also partially explains the ultimate rejection of his music by an audience that was engulfed in a rediscovery of English folk-song,\(^4\) an idiom that had very little interest for the composer.\(^5\)

What the critics and audiences failed to recognize was that Mr. Orr is exceedingly English, as Dr. Edwards purports:

... Orr is a typical Englishman; he has his roots in the Cotswold Hills, and his "Englishness,"
whilst admitting outside influences, ever steers a middle course between them, giving way entirely to none.  

His music may be compared analogically to a tangelo, a hybrid form resulting from a cross-fertilization of an orange and a tangerine. The resulting entity is unique, an admirable quality in itself. Similarly, Orr's music should be appreciated because of its uniqueness, for, as Dr. Edwards observes, although he has very obvious influences, he is uniquely himself. His compositions are not easy; rather only the most intrepid singer should attempt many of them. The accompaniments are also frequently difficult, and rarely subjugated to the role of merely accompanying the voice. Hence, the appellation of "Duet for Voice and Piano" is most appropriate.

His consistent implementation of duplet-triplet patterns is reminiscent of Brahms and Wolf. An extensive use of syncopation is employed, and one notes a high degree of chromaticism, particularly in his earlier works. His later works exhibit a certain refinement and a more economical use of chromaticism; in fact, his composition for 'cello and piano, "A Midsummer Dance," written in the late 1950's, reverts somewhat to less-startling progressions and fewer accidentals than do some of his earliest pieces.

It is highly recommended that there be more performances of Orr's works, particularly his songs, so that musicians can become more familiar with his output. Plans
are being formalized at this time for a concert of the
composer's music on the campus of Auburn University, Auburn,
Alabama. This concert will take place during 1972 and will
entail both instrumental and vocal compositions. More con­
certs are urged.

There is also a need for an anthology of twentieth-
century English song, one which would include the works of
Orr. His songs could therefore be assured of being pre­served for posterity. This project is highly recommended.

Orr is a significant figure in the history of
English song. His distinction of being the most prolific
composer of Housman settings is an accomplishment in itself.
The two cycles, one for baritone and one for tenor, of
"Shropshire Lad" texts are significant achievements.
Indeed, "With Rue My Heart Is Laden" was considered by
Philip Heseltine to be one of the most beautiful songs that
any English composer has written (see p.95). Christopher
Le Fleming, Sidney Northcote, and A. Copley believe
the cycle of seven songs to be Orr's chief contribution to
English song. In 1937, Northcote asserted that the cycle
for baritone was one of the chief contributions to English
song since World War I.

Orr's songs deserve a place in the history of song
literature because they are some of the most appealing
and personal vocal music to be written by any twentieth-
century English composer. Through the enlightenment and
awareness of musicians who endeavor to examine the music
of C. W. Orr, it is hoped that, in the words of A. Copley, "this most personal yet at the same time universal, music must surely one day come into its own."^{15}
FOOTNOTES

1Dr. P. M. H. Edwards, "C. W. Orr, A Short Appreciation" (Victoria, British Columbia, Canada: unpublished), p. 11. He also mentions that the other composer is Edmund Rubbra.


5Orr, op. cit., letter written to the author on December 29, 1971, p. 4.

6Dr. P. M. H. Edwards, "C. W. Orr, A Short Appreciation" (Victoria, British Columbia, Canada: unpublished), p. 10.

7Dr. Kenneth Klaus expounds upon Karl Jasper's importance of uniqueness to the romantic spirit in The Romantic Period in Music (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1970), p. 27.

8Edwards, op. cit., p. 10.


10Edwards, op. cit.


14 Northcote, op. cit., p. 358.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Periodicals


**Music**


_"Chanson d'Automne." Köln: Tischer and Jagenberg, 1915._

_"Den Lenz lass kommen." Köln: Tischer and Jagenberg, 1915._

_"Frühlingslied." Köln: Tischer and Jagenberg, 1915._


Gurney, Ivor. **Ludlow and Teme.** London: Stainer and Bell, 1923.


________. **Four Songs.** London: Oxford University Press, 1959.


________. **Seven Songs from "A Shropshire Lad".** London: J. and W. Chester, 1934.

________. "Soldier from the Wars Returning." London: Stainer and Bell, 1937.

________. **Three Songs from "A Shropshire Lad".** London: J. and W. Chester, 1940.


Unpublished


"C. W. Orr, A Short Appreciation." Victoria, British Columbia, n.d.


Heseltine, Philip. Personal letter written to the composer. Cefn Bryntalch, Montgomeryshire, June 4, 1922.

Personal letter written to the composer. Cefn Bryntalch, Montgomeryshire, December 25, 1924.


Consonance and Dissonance in Vocal Parts:

All consonance et, strong or soft, breaks.  

1) Placing the ending

2) The carpenter's son

3) The king of France

4) The last of them

5) Of such high

6) By college, youth and trill.
Condition of misfits, music of a piano part.

Bar 15:

When I watch the living years.

F. D. E. bar
Bar 38, c 44.

Requiem.

Bar 38.

Hugley Cropley.

Bar 47.

A. D. 13.

(At bar 13.
Inserts two signatures)
While running on in strutting
5th Bar on the last page.

Alternative lay-out of piano part.

When the last four figures settle
Bar 48/9.

Tisnally of Portland
Bar 37.
Candidate:    Joseph Thomas Rawlins, Jr.

Major Field:    Music

Title of Thesis:    "The Songs of Charles Wilfred Orr with Special Emphasis on His Housman Settings"

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

July 5, 1972