

# Gustav Holst, Songs of the West, and the English Folk Song Movement

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*Although Gustav Holst never collected English folk songs himself, he was very familiar with them through his friendship with Ralph Vaughan Williams and other collectors such as Cecil Sharp and William Gillies Whittaker. He used a number of them in his compositions and made several arrangements of folk songs collected by others. His first work founded on folk song was Songs of the West, based on Sabine Baring-Gould's collection of songs from Devon and Cornwall – a companion piece to Somerset Rhapsody, which was based on Sharp's collection. While Somerset Rhapsody went on to become one of Holst's better-known works, Songs of the West has been largely forgotten.*

*Holst arranged sixteen songs from George Gardiner's Hampshire collection for the Novello series Folk Songs of England, as well as creating a number of choral arrangements of traditional songs. Through his friendship with Sharp he became a strong supporter of the English Folk Dance Society and taught at a number of their summer schools. His choral ballet The Morning of the Year introduced traditional English dances under the direction of co-producer Douglas Kennedy, and was performed in 1927 by the English Folk Dance Society in support of the Cecil Sharp Memorial Fund. This article considers Holst's engagement with English folk music, the genesis of his Songs of the West, and his wider contribution to the folk music movement in the early part of the twentieth century.*

'I believe very strongly that we are largely the result of our surroundings and that we never do anything alone. Everything that is worth doing is the result of several minds playing on each other.'

Gustav Holst<sup>1</sup>

In October of 1909, as the daily temperatures started to show signs of dropping from the extremes of summer, the great and the good from the expatriate community in Delhi assembled at Government House to hear the Governor's band give a concert. The programme included pieces by well-known composers such as Handel, Gounod, and Brahms, as well as some whose names are less familiar to us today, such as Waldteufel and Komzác. In the middle of the concert the musical director, Edward Behr, had included the first performance of an orchestral arrangement of West Country folk songs, composed by a friend of his from the Royal College of Music, Gustav von Holst. The piece was described on the hand-written concert programme as *Grand Fantasia – Songs of the West* (Figure 1). A footnote added: 'first performance at Govt. House – from composer's

MUSIC.		COMPOSER.
1 March	Kaiser - Marsch	Komzak
2 Walze	Dalores	Waldtaffel
3 Polka-bande from	"Sing Mars"	Lomax
4 Grand Fantasia	"Songs of the West"	Gustav von Holst.
5 Three Pieces	(1) Minuetto; (2) Minuetto; (3) Gavotta	Handel
6 Hungarian Dance	W.B.	Brahms

*Edward Behr*  
 Director,  
 H. E. The Governor's Band.  
 \* First Performance at this Venue — From Composer's Manuscript.

**Figure 1**  
 Programme card for  
 the concert in Delhi,  
 8 October 1909  
 Courtesy of Holst  
 Birthplace Museum

manuscript'.<sup>2</sup> This was the first of only a few performances of this work and it is now largely forgotten. The original score is in the British Library and it was the discovery of this work in the library

catalogue, during a search for material related to the life and work of Sabine Baring-Gould, that prompted this investigation.

### England and Classical Music in the Late Nineteenth Century

In the nineteenth century the description of England as the 'land without music' was really only justified in the sense that there was very little good English music to be heard in the concert hall. There was, actually, a lot of music in England, and some very fine musicians, but the typical concert was dominated by German composers; the great English composers of the past, such as Byrd, Tallis, and Purcell, were all but forgotten. From the middle of the century, however, there was a slow change in the tide which allowed a trickle of English composers to emerge. Arthur Sullivan was the first of these, followed by others such as Hubert Parry and Charles Villiers Stanford. Then, at the end of the century, Edward Elgar became recognized as a composer of genius, after many years in the wilderness. While the trickle never became a flood, it certainly became a well-filled stream.

Parry and Stanford, then only in their thirties, were among the first staff members of the Royal College of Music when it opened in 1883. Although they are now out of fashion, they can be seen as the first English composers of their time to have been consciously working towards an English 'national music', and they did have their successes. If we talk of 'English national song', then, surely, Parry's setting of 'Jerusalem' must be regarded as one of the archetypes. When the Folk-Song Society was formed in 1898, Stanford and Parry – by then well established in their own right – became joint vice presidents (there were four vice presidents, all of them composers, the other two being Sir John Stainer and the Scottish composer Sir Alexander Mackenzie). In his inaugural address, Parry offered his opinion that 'in true folk-songs there is no sham, no got-up glitter, and no vulgarity'.<sup>3</sup> His main theme was that, in recovering English folk song, the society would provide English composers with an authentic national voice.

The use of folk song in classical music was not, actually, a very new idea. Many classical composers had used folk tunes in their compositions. Between 1807 and 1816

Ludwig van Beethoven produced settings of a large number of British folk songs for the Scottish publisher James Thompson, the best-known set of which is probably his '25 Scottish Folk Songs'.<sup>4</sup> Chopin, Brahms, and Liszt likewise all made settings of folk tunes, Brahms's 'Hungarian Dances' being among the best-known examples. Mostly it was dance tunes that attracted the attention of classical composers at this time.

The Royal College of Music was to be the launch pad for a new school of English music. Composers such as Parry, Stanford, and Mackenzie might have been too enveloped by the German Romantic/classical influence ever fully to break free from its all-encompassing embrace, but, encouraged by their teaching and enthusiasm, their pupils, in particular Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst, would make the break, driven on by their own love for traditional song and their recognition of what they could learn from it. During the early years of the twentieth century the number of composers who took an interest in English traditional song increased, as men such as Frederick Delius, George Butterworth, Ernest Moeran, Edmund Rubbra, Gerald Finzi, and Percy Grainger all discovered it for themselves and found ways to use it in their music. This idea was not restricted to England, of course. Scottish composers such as Hamish McCunn and John McEwen were following the same trail. In Hungary, Béla Bartók was successfully making use of Hungarian folk songs as source material, and there were other examples throughout Europe and, later, the USA. Of course, there were some who thought it had all gone too far, and many of the next generation reacted against 'cowpat music' – the derogatory term coined by Elisabeth Lutyens to describe the English pastoral school of composers – and went their own way.

Vaughan Williams and Holst had deliberately set out to create a new 'English music'.<sup>5</sup> They recognized that the beautiful melodies sung by traditional singers offered a key, of sorts, to realizing that vision. Sung in modes and often so freely that time signatures were irrelevant, these songs, and their singers, had much to teach the composers. From their early experiments they learned that this meant more than simply stringing folk tunes together – there is more than a grain of truth in the oft-quoted remark of composer, conductor, and raconteur Constant Lambert: 'To put it vulgarly, the whole trouble with a folk-song is that once you have played it through there is nothing much you can do except play it over again and play it rather louder.'<sup>6</sup> As we shall see, it was what they learned from English folk song that informed their music and gave us some of the finest examples of English classical music since the death of Purcell.

### **Gustav Holst**

Gustavus Theodore von Holst was born in Cheltenham on 21 September 1874, the elder son of musician Adolph von Holst and his wife Clara (Figure 2). Gustav's great-grandfather had moved from his native Sweden to work as a musician at the Russian court, but had left, possibly after a political controversy, and moved to London in the early nineteenth century. Gustav Holst changed his name to remove the 'von' during the First World War, but subsequently discovered that the family were not actually entitled to it in any case, and that it had been added by his grandfather to enhance his status as a teacher of music in Cheltenham. Holst's mother died when he was eight years old. He was not a healthy child and asthma and neuritis continued to affect him all his life.



**Figure 2**  
 Cartoon of Gustav Holst  
 by William Rothenstein, 1925  
 Courtesy of  
 Holst Birthplace Museum

It is not surprising that he became a musician, given the family background in music, and he played piano and violin from an early age. His father encouraged him to take up the trombone in the belief that it would help his asthma. In the event, this proved of great value, not only for the insight it gave him into the requirements of the brass section, but because it enabled him to supplement his income when money was short. He also started to compose music and had completed his first

symphony by the age of eighteen. When he left school he failed to get a scholarship which would have made it possible to study in London. He obtained a part-time post as organist and choirmaster in the village of Wyck Rissington in the Cotswolds and also as the conductor of the choral society at Bourton-on-the-Water. This post also required some teaching and it was during this period that Holst discovered his natural gift as a teacher of music. He came to love the Cotswolds as he made his way between the villages where he taught and, during the summer at least, he would walk the twenty miles home to Cheltenham. He had decided, however, that above all he wanted to be a composer. The local success of his opera *Lansdown Castle* convinced Holst's father that he had a future in composition and he scraped together £100 for his son to go to London to study at the Royal College of Music.<sup>7</sup>

Holst arrived in London in May 1893 and began to build up his theoretical knowledge of music before studying composition under Stanford and musical history with Parry. His health was still poor, despite abstinence from alcohol and his having switched to a vegetarian diet, and his neuritis forced him to give up the piano in favour of the organ. He made the most of his spare time in London (as far as funds would allow) by attending as many concerts as possible. The college gave him a small grant, but that and his father's £100 were not enough to live on. The trombone provided a financial lifeline at this point and during the summer holidays he secured an engagement with Stanislav Wurm's White Viennese Band, playing light music at seaside piers and similar venues. He called this work 'worming' and was glad when, a few years later, he was able to put it behind him.

When he went back to the Royal College of Music in the autumn of 1895 he met Ralph Vaughan Williams, who was returning to the college for a second period of study

after having left in order to read history and music at Cambridge. Their friendship lasted until Holst's death and was of supreme importance to both men, despite their differences in background and physical nature. In the course of their friendship they supported each other in many ways. Most importantly, perhaps, the two started to share their work, leading to what they called their 'field days' when they would play their latest compositions over to each other and exchange criticism and advice. They were both interested in socialism but Holst went deeper into this than his friend. He regularly attended meetings at Kelmescott House, in Hammersmith, to hear William Morris and Bernard Shaw speak. A proof page of Morris's hand-printed edition of the *Canterbury Tales* became one of his most treasured possessions.

Holst left the Royal College of Music in 1898 and supported himself for two years by working for the Carl Rosa Opera Company as répétiteur, playing the piano for rehearsals and also playing his trombone in the pit during performances. In his spare time he continued to compose, and he had also started to study the oriental mythologies that were to influence some of his later work. He married Isobel Harrison in 1901 and, for a while, the young couple had a tough time of it. Holst supported them precariously with a variety of musical engagements but with little success as a composer. In 1904, however, he secured, with Vaughan Williams's help, a permanent teaching position at James Allen's School for Girls.

Although he had no formal training, Holst's time in the Cotswolds had allowed him to develop his natural talent for music teaching and he continued to teach for the rest of his life. The position may have been 'permanent' but it was not full-time and Holst pursued the sort of 'portfolio' career with which today's young musicians would identify. This had the advantage that it allowed time for composing at weekends and during the school holidays. The following year he accepted a teaching position at St Paul's Girls' School, Hammersmith. This was a job that he kept until his death. One of the benefits that he prized most was the soundproof room where he could retreat to compose, often using it when the school was closed.

Holst had also been teaching adults in the evenings at the Passmore Edwards Settlement and, in 1907, on Vaughan Williams's recommendation, he started to teach adults at Morley College for Working Men and Women, then based in the Old Vic building in Southwark. This post and its duties accorded well with his socialist ideals and he continued to teach there for many years. His 'Paulinas' and his 'Morleyites' became the most important people in his life apart from his close friends and his wife. In the same year, his only child, Imogen, was born.

Holst was by now recognized as a composer, although he still had to make his mark. His oriental interests led to works like the chamber opera *Savitri* and the *Hymns from the Rig Veda*, while *Beni Mora* was written after a holiday in Algeria. But at the same time he was, like his friend Vaughan Williams, on a quest for 'Englishness' in his music. Edward Mason had become the conductor of the New Symphony Orchestra in 1903 and, in 1907, founded the highly regarded Edward Mason Choir, the mission of which was to perform music by young English composers.<sup>8</sup> At their first concert in April 1908 the choir performed Holst's *King Estmere – An Old English Ballad for Chorus and Orchestra*. This was based on the ballad text in Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.<sup>9</sup>

Although this piece had been written in 1903, this was its first performance. Holst dedicated it to his old teacher, C. V. Stanford. In April 1910 another of Mason's concerts included the first performance of Holst's *Somerset Rhapsody* in its rewritten form. Holst regarded this latter performance as his first real success and as a watershed in his career, moving on from what he called the 'early horrors'. He was struggling with the neuritis in his arm which made writing extremely difficult, but the improving financial situation and some timely commissions made it possible for him to get away for much-needed breaks which provided inspiration as well as recuperation.

There was no question of his joining the military in the Great War because of his fragile health, and he continued teaching and composing. The family moved to Thaxted, in Essex, from where he travelled to teach in London for two days each week. He had admired the village and its fine church while on a walking holiday and felt that it was a good place to live and work. There he met Daisy, Countess of Warwick, who was the major landowner in the village and who had retained Easton Lodge as a private residence when her husband inherited the title and Warwick Castle. Notorious as a mistress of Edward, Prince of Wales, she was, like Holst, heavily influenced by Morris and Shaw, and became a supporter and benefactor of the socialist cause, earning her the nickname of the 'Red Countess'. She unsuccessfully stood for Parliament as a Labour candidate in the 1923 election. In Thaxted she entertained leading socialists, such as George Bernard Shaw, Ramsey MacDonald, and Emmanuel Shinwell, and encouraged a number of like-minded artists and writers to move to the village, including H. G. Wells. She also held the living of Thaxted parish and appointed as vicar the radical socialist Anglo-Catholic clergyman Conrad le Despenser Roden Noel, who 'became famous for his plainsong, incense, flower-processions, folk-dancing and radical politics',<sup>10</sup> and who, on at least one occasion, raised a red flag over the church on May Day.

Holst got on well with the Countess, with Wells, and with Noel. He volunteered his help with music at the church and, at Noel's suggestion, they started the Thaxted Whitsun Festival, when the villagers, the 'Paulinas', and the 'Morleyites' would come together for a weekend of song and dance, both organized and impromptu, mixing folk song settings with choral music and old with new. Music filled every corner of the village, day and night, and there are even reports of Holst conducting an impromptu choir on the station platform while the 'Morleyites' waited for their train back to London.

In 1916 one of Noel's acolytes, Robert Woodfield, found a copy of Sandys's collection of Christmas carols on a bookstall in a London street market and took it to Thaxted.<sup>11</sup> Noel was particularly taken with the carol 'Tomorrow Shall Be my Dancing Day', copied it out, and read it from the pulpit in place of a sermon.<sup>12</sup> He then pinned the words up on the church notice board, where Holst saw them and became interested in the metaphor of dance in the religious context. He set Sandys's words, with a new tune, in a choral arrangement that he called 'This Have I Done for my True Love'. In a letter to Lucy Broadwood, he wrote, "This have I done" is my own tune – I don't like the traditional one.<sup>13</sup> Holst dedicated the song to Conrad Noel and gave it to him as a birthday present. Country and morris dancing had been an important part of

Thaxted village life since 1911 when Conrad's wife, Miriam, had invited Mary Neal to send a dance teacher to instruct the children and young people of the village. As a result of Miriam Conrad's interest, and with the support of Noel's assistant (and successor as vicar) Jack Putterill, Thaxted became a centre for dance, particularly the morris. When some of the church bells were recast in 1949 one was given the inscription 'I Ring for the General Dance', echoing the last line of Sandys's carol and celebrating the dual connection with English dance and with the place of dance in worship which had so fascinated both Noel and Holst.<sup>14</sup> This link was not always appreciated by the godly and there were objections to Holst's song being sung in the church. Indeed, as late as 1951, Ralph Vaughan Williams reported that its inclusion in a church concert at the Leith Hill Festival elicited complaints. 'This Have I Done for my True Love' is one of Holst's miniature masterpieces and an enduring favourite. But while he was living in Thaxted he also composed what was to become his greatest work, *Seven Pieces for Large Orchestra*, which became known as *The Planets*.

In the closing months of the war Holst accepted a uniformed position with the YMCA to teach music and organize concerts for British troops in Salonika. Before he left, H. Balfour Gardiner, another of his friends, arranged a private performance of *The Planets* at the Queen's Hall, conducted by Adrian Boult, so that Holst could hear what he had written. Holst enjoyed his time in Salonika, despite the difficult conditions, and took the opportunity to visit Athens, which he loved. His work also took him to Constantinople for a few weeks. On his return from Salonika he settled back into a routine of teaching and composing. He accepted a lectureship in composition at Reading University and also joined Vaughan Williams in teaching composition at the Royal College of Music. The first public performance of *The Planets* had taken place while he was in Salonika, but only five of the seven movements had been played on that occasion and the reviews were not good. The work was not performed in full until 15 November 1920, and this time the majority of the critics were enthusiastic. This was the point at which Holst became a celebrity, something which was totally foreign to his nature. He turned down all honours offered to him and refused to give interviews or autographs. New York and Chicago vied with each other for the honour of being the first to put on an American performance of *The Planets*, and he did accept invitations to lecture in the USA. The stress caused by these demands on him, and the after-effects of a fall from the rostrum at a concert in Reading in 1923, led him to cut back on his commitments and he reluctantly gave up his teaching positions at Morley College and the Royal College of Music.

Works like *The Hymn of Jesus* and *Egdon Heath* added to his reputation, although they divided opinions among both audiences and critics. Throughout this time Holst and Vaughan Williams continued their 'field days' and supported each other in many other ways. In 1932 Holst wrote at length to Vaughan Williams from Harvard to tell him about his visit there. This included the news that he had been ill with a duodenal ulcer and had spent sixteen days in hospital. While he recovered sufficiently to return home and get back to work, he was not cured. In May 1934 he went into hospital for surgery to deal with the ulcer, but died two days after the operation. He was fifty-nine years old.

### Holst and Folk Song

Imogen Holst says that her father had been brought up to believe that ‘folk songs are either bad or Irish’.<sup>15</sup> Like most children growing up in Victorian England, he would have come across traces of folk culture. He remembered the bells and ribbons of morris men seen from the window of the house in Cheltenham. Many years later he wrote his *Toccata* founded on the Northumbrian pipe tune ‘Newburn Lads’, saying in a letter to his friend William Whittaker, ‘at the end I have “flattered” the first man who ever played it to me. He was an old man in Cheltenham with a hurdygurdy somewhere about 1879 and this was his only tune and each time he played it he had fewer notes than before and what notes were left were further from what they were when they were young.’<sup>16</sup>

Holst came to love English folk song as a result of his regular discussions with Ralph Vaughan Williams, whose interest had been aroused in 1893 after having discovered Broadwood and Fuller Maitland’s *English County Songs*, published in that year. The song that particularly attracted Vaughan Williams’s attention was ‘Dives and Lazarus’, a tune that stayed with him all his life and which he arranged for harp and string orchestra as *Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus* (1939).<sup>17</sup> He wrote: ‘I had that sense of recognition – “here’s something which I have known all my life – only I didn’t know it!”’<sup>18</sup> He met and corresponded with Lucy Broadwood and started to talk about folk music in his public lectures. Despite this, and the fact that he had made some arrangements of folk songs for these lectures, he did not begin to collect folk songs himself until December 1903 when he heard Charles Potiphar sing ‘Bushes and Briars’ at Ingrave in Essex and noted it down.<sup>19</sup> Some years later he told an audience in America:

Here was something entirely new to us and yet not new. We felt that this was what we expected our national melody to be, we knew somehow that when we first heard ‘Dives and Lazarus’ or ‘Bushes and Briars’ that this was just what we were looking for. Well, we were dazzled, we wanted to preach a new gospel, we wanted to rhapsodize on these tunes just as Liszt and Grieg had done on theirs: we did not suppose that by so doing we were inventing a national music ready-made – we simply were fascinated by the tunes and wanted other people to be fascinated too.<sup>20</sup>

For Vaughan Williams, collecting songs became a passion over the next ten years, and Holst came to share his enthusiasm. Both men saw folk song as a key that opened the door that led to the future of their music. Imogen Holst wrote of her father’s search for ‘what he called “the musical idiom of the English language”’. He wanted to write tunes that would feel “at one with the words”. The folk songs helped him more than anything else, for their words and tunes seem to have grown together, inseparably.<sup>21</sup>

It is not certain how or when Holst met Cecil Sharp, though it is likely that they were introduced to each other by Vaughan Williams, who had met Sharp in 1900 – without, however, discussing folk song at that time. Indeed, Vaughan Williams recorded that when he began collecting songs he did not think to tell Sharp that he was doing so, not knowing that Sharp had started to collect songs in Somerset four months earlier.<sup>22</sup> Whenever that first meeting took place, we know that, by 1905, Holst and Sharp had become friends and that Holst had invited Sharp to talk on English folk song to his class

at the Passmore Edwards Settlement. Imogen Holst wrote that her father believed that 'when the time came for the history of twentieth-century English music to be written, Cecil Sharp's name would stand out above all others'.<sup>23</sup> She went on to say: 'Composers in other countries had been helped in their struggles to escape from too much Wagner-worship by the strong national traditions of their own folk music. Without Cecil Sharp's help, English composers might still have been engulfed in the silence that descended on them after Purcell's death.'<sup>24</sup>

Both Holst and Vaughan Williams experimented with ideas based on folk songs and on settings for folk songs. For a while Holst tried to work out these ideas in a form of pseudo-folk song, as in his *Two Songs without Words* (1906). But both men discovered in the course of these experiments that the route did not lie through simple reiteration of folk tunes, but rather in what they could learn from them that would inform their own compositions.

For Vaughan Williams the lessons were, in the view of the writer and broadcaster Stephen Johnson, threefold.<sup>25</sup> What folk song taught him was:

1. The value of modes, which he 'discovered' in folk music and then combined in new and original ways in his compositions: for example, the use of the Phrygian mode in *Variations on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* and the Lydian mode in his *Sea Interlude*.
2. Rhythmic freedom. Parts of the *Pastoral Symphony*, for instance, are written without bar lines. Johnson quotes the folk song example of 'Brigg Fair', where it is almost impossible to follow the beat.
3. The value of variations, as exemplified by the multiple forms of his beloved 'Dives and Lazarus' and its cousins ('Star of the County Down', 'Gilderoy', 'Come All You Worthy Christians', 'The Marigold', and so on).

In the case of Holst, the lesson he took from folk music was one of simplicity and economy. On this basis, he was able to overlay his personal ideas of polyphony and rhythmic form without losing the essential idea. Holst wrote to Lucy Broadwood, 'Lots of my things are folksongs in character but as far as I know the tunes are mine.'<sup>26</sup>

In 1905 Vaughan Williams was asked to provide the music for a masque to be performed as part of the Shakespeare birthday celebrations. The piece chosen was *Pan's Anniversary*, originally created in 1625 by Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, and he asked Holst to help him with some of the dances for the piece by providing the music. For these Holst arranged a number of English folk tunes, including 'Sellenger's Round', 'The Lost Lady', 'Maria Marten', and 'All on Spurn Point', taken from Vaughan Williams's collection or, with permission, from Lucy Broadwood's collection. Holst and Vaughan Williams provided further incidental music for the performance which also borrowed from English traditional song. The masque was notable, too, for bringing to the stage the Shakespearian Bidford Morris Dancers, who performed 'Shepherd's Hey' to their own music as part of the performance.<sup>27</sup> This admixture of traditional with classical dance was a foretaste of the work that Holst and Vaughan Williams would undertake with the English Folk Dance Society in years to come.

### **Two Selections of Folk Songs**

It was also in 1905 that Vaughan Williams began work on his first *Norfolk Rhapsody*, based on the tunes of two folk songs, 'The Captain's Apprentice' and 'Bold Young Sailor'. Sharp suggested to Holst that he should follow his friend's example in setting folk tunes for orchestra.<sup>28</sup> The result was Holst's *Two Selections of Folk Songs* (Op. 21). One of the selections was based on Somerset songs collected and published by Sharp and the other on songs from Devon and Cornwall collected by Sabine Baring-Gould and his colleagues, Henry Fleetwood Sheppard and Frederick Bussell. Following Fleetwood Sheppard's death in 1901, Sharp had replaced him as music editor for the revised edition of their *Songs of the West*, published in 1905, and it was in this capacity that Sharp gave permission for Holst to use tunes from this collection, as well as songs that he had collected himself in Somerset. Sharp gave Holst a copy of *Songs of the West* and it is now in the collection of Holst's papers in the care of the Cheltenham Museums. It looks well used but, apart from the owner's signature inside, it is an unprepossessing, standard edition. It does have a number of pencil marks throughout – predominantly ticks and crosses – probably made during the process of choosing the songs for inclusion in this part of the *Two Selections*.

The new edition of *Songs of the West* was published by Methuen in October 1905, so Holst must have worked rapidly, because the first performance of the *Two Selections of Folk Songs* was on Saturday, 3 February 1906. It was split between two separate concerts at the Pump Room in Bath, and Holst himself conducted the City of Bath Pump Room Orchestra. Cecil Sharp and West Country folk song were strongly featured in these concerts.<sup>29</sup>

In the first part of the afternoon programme, following performances of Rossini's overture *William Tell* and Gounod's *Serenade*, Sharp delivered a short lecture titled 'What Is a Folk Song?' He then accompanied his protégée Mattie Kay on the piano as she sang 'The Seeds of Love' and 'I'm Seventeen Come Sunday'. The first part of the concert concluded with a section of *Cavalleria Rusticana*. The second part commenced with the performance of *A New Selection of Songs of Somerset*. The programme notes identify the ten tunes from Sharp's collection that were used by Holst as 'Dicky of Taunton Deane', 'The Sweet Primroses', 'The Trees They Do Grow High', 'Sheep Shearing Song', 'The Little Turtle Dove', 'High Germany', 'The True Lover's Farewell', 'Bruton Town', 'The Sign of the Bonny Blue Bell', and 'Let Bucks a-Hunting Go'. The concert continued with a pair of violin solos before Cecil Sharp gave another short lecture, on 'The Peasant Singers and Personal Experiences as a Collector', after which Mattie Kay sang 'The Little Turtle Dove' and 'Dabbling in the Dew'. The concert ended with a performance of the bridal chorus from *Lohengrin*.

The evening concert followed the same pattern. After Weber's *Freischütz* as overture and the scherzo *Berggeist* by Franz von Blon, Sharp delivered another short lecture on 'The Place of Folk Song in National Life', before Mattie Kay sang 'The Wraggle Taggle Gipsies' and 'The Two Magicians'. The first part of the performance closed with Wagner's overture *Tannhäuser*. After the interval, the concert continued with Holst's *New Selection of Songs of the West*. For this piece the tunes were listed in the programme as 'Hal-ar-Tow' (*sic*), 'Henry Martyn', 'Cicely Sweet', 'The Marigold', 'On a May Morning So Early', 'Old Adam Was a Poacher', 'Death and the Lady', 'Paul Jones', 'The Evening Prayer', 'Strawberry

Fair', 'Down by a River Side', 'The Hostess's Daughter', 'Three Jovial Welshmen', and 'Widdicombe Fair'. Cecil Sharp then delivered a fourth lecture, although the programme does not indicate what this was about. Neither does it list the fourth pair of songs sung by Mattie Kay, but the concert concluded with a selection from *Iolanthe* by Sullivan.

The reviewer of the concert in *Keene's Bath Journal* complimented Sharp, described as 'an enthusiast in rescuing folk songs from oblivion', on his 'chatty, interesting addresses'. He also approved of Mattie Kay's singing, noting of her performance of 'The Two Magicians' that she 'entered fully into the spirit of the composition', and that she 'good naturedly responded to several encores'. The report also states that 'Mr. G. von Holst conducted at each concert a composition of his own upon the songs of Somerset, which found much favour.'<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the failure to attribute the tunes in the second of Holst's *Two Selections* to their counties of origin can be put down to the partisanship of a reviewer targeting a Somerset readership.

The *Bath Chronicle* in its review was similarly complimentary about Sharp's 'delightfully chatty' talks and Mattie Kay's singing. The content of Sharp's lectures is described in some detail, and it is clear that he used the occasion to describe his own views and experiences and to make a pitch for the importance of English folk song. This reviewer devotes less space to Holst's 'charming selection of songs of Somerset', although he describes the audience as applauding the piece enthusiastically and as having been 'delighted with the fine manner in which the charming old airs were presented'.<sup>31</sup>

### Songs of the West

Holst was not, however, happy with either of his two selections and over the following year he worked further on the piece and split it into two separate works: *Songs of the West* (Op. 21 [No. 1]), and *A Somerset Rhapsody* (Op. 21 [No. 2]).<sup>32</sup> In both cases the number of tunes included was reduced; in *Songs of the West* it was halved from fourteen to seven. The original score for *Songs of the West* is in the British Library (Figure 3), and it clearly demonstrates the extent to which Holst cut and pasted pages from the manuscript of the *New*



**Figure 3**  
*Songs of the West*  
 autograph manuscript  
 Courtesy of Holst Foundation  
 and the British Library

*Selection of Songs of the West* into the revised score, adding new material where necessary to link the component tunes. In the process he destroyed the original manuscript so that (unless a presently unknown copy should be discovered) we have no way of knowing the original configuration or content of the first version, which will never, consequently, be heard again in the form in which it was performed in February 1906.

As noted above, the revised work, *Songs of the West*, received its first public performance far from the country in which the original songs were collected, in Delhi on 8 October 1909. We do not know how it was received there, but on 11 December of the same year *Fantasia on Folk Songs – Songs of the West* had its English premiere when Holst conducted a performance by the Oxford House Musical and Dramatic Association at the Excelsior Hall in Bethnal Green Road, east London.<sup>33</sup> Described in the programme as the ‘First Performance in England’, the concert was conducted by Mr Cuthbert Kelly.<sup>34</sup>

The work was performed again at the Pump Room in Bath on 17 November 1910, when it was played by the City of Bath Pump Room Orchestra in an evening concert, this time without the support of Cecil Sharp’s lectures or Mattie Kay’s songs. It was conducted by the composer, who, to the apparent surprise of the reviewer in *Keene’s Bath Journal*, ‘dispensed altogether with the use of a baton’. Its companion piece, now known as *A Somerset Rhapsody*, had been played at the afternoon concert on the same day. A scrapbook in the Holst Museum contains a copy of the concert programme, but the pages for the performances of *Songs of the West* and *Somerset Rhapsody* have been cut out and mounted separately.<sup>35</sup> *Songs of the West* was the eighth item in the evening concert and the description of the piece in the programme gives us a good account of it:

This Fantasia is based on melodies in ‘Songs of the West’ by permission of Mr. Cecil Sharp and Messrs. Methuen, the editor and publishers respectively.

It opens with the ‘Hal an-tow’, otherwise the Helston ‘Furry Dance’ which is still danced in Helston every spring. Then follows ‘Henry Martyn,’ a sea song played first by woodwind and then (in another key) by the strings, after which comes ‘Cicely Sweet’, first on the ‘cellos and then on the wood wind. ‘Henry Martyn’ is repeated, after which comes the well-known ‘As I walked out one May Morning’, first played by the oboe. ‘Old Adam was a Poacher’, a wild poaching song, is played by the full orchestra and then ‘As I walked out’ is repeated, gradually changing into a broader tune, ‘Death and the Lady’, first played by the full orchestra, then by the clarinets and bassoons, finally as a horn solo, above which the oboe softly plays ‘As I walked out’.

A short introduction heralds the last and best known song which tells of the fight between the good ship ‘Marigold’ and the Turks at the end of the sixteenth century. This is played by the horns and repeated by the full orchestra. Two variations follow – the first for wood wind and the second for strings, the trumpet playing the melody. After this the ‘cellos and horns play ‘The Marigold’ above a ‘pedal bass’, while violins and oboes play ‘As I walked out’, and, on the top of all, the flutes and clarinets play the ‘Hal an tow’. This continues for some time and gradually becomes louder (the only alteration being that in the middle a muted trumpet plays ‘Old Adam was a poacher’) until the whole orchestra bursts into the opening ‘Hal an tow’ and the work comes to an end.

The reviews were warm, if not ecstatic. The *Bath Chronicle* reported that ‘In the evening performance Mr. von Holst conducted the performance of his Fantasia, “Songs of the West”. This work has previously been heard at the Pump Room, and those who, like Ophelia in “Dear Little Denmark” like “something loud with a tune”, would probably feel disposed to prefer it to the “Somerset Rhapsody” [...] Many clever orchestral effects are embodied in this fantasia.’<sup>36</sup> The reviewer in the *Bath Herald* wrote: “Songs of the West” is a fantasia based upon a collection of West Country songs by Mr. Cecil Sharp under the same title. It proved a delightful combination of some charming melodies, the best known being perhaps “Marigold”, others including “As I walked out”, “Henry Martyn” and “Old Adam was a poacher”.<sup>37</sup> *Keene’s Bath Journal* also thought the piece ‘a delightful combination of charming melodies and met with warm appreciation’.<sup>38</sup>

There is then another long gap before the next, and final, appearance of *Songs of the West*, described as *A Setting for Orchestra of West Country Folk Songs*, on 8 March 1913 at the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute.<sup>39</sup> Although the reviews for the piece had, in general, been favourable, its composer was not happy with the work and withdrew it. Holst’s daughter, Imogen, described the piece as ‘a distressing failure’.<sup>40</sup> There were, in her view, two main problems: firstly, he had used too many songs (as he did with the Somerset selection); and secondly, he found difficulty in linking the songs together and in dealing convincingly with the changes in mode, tempo, and key. She describes his attempts to write himself out of these difficulties as ‘clumsy and unconvincing’. Holst borrowed some of the music from *Songs of the West* for his incidental music for the Stepney children’s pageant of 1909. The most successful ‘survivor’ was ‘Evening Prayer’ which, as ‘Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John’, was introduced as the third of the *Six Choral Folk Songs* (Op. 36) (1916).<sup>41</sup>

With the manuscript of the first version destroyed and that of the second withdrawn, *Songs of the West* seemed destined never to be performed again. Holst had not, however, forgotten it completely. In 1924, in a letter to his friend W. G. Whittaker, he wrote: ‘I once wrote a selection myself! – It was from Baring-Gould’s ‘Songs of the West’. Goodwin and Tabb have the score but I could get it any time you wished if your br[ass] band people would care to look at it. It would suit them better than PF I fancy. Also I hope I could improve it a little before it was arranged – so far as I can remember it was only bad in places!’<sup>42</sup>

Whittaker’s ‘br[ass] band people’ do not appear to have taken up this offer, but it is significant that Holst should have recognized its potential as a wind band piece. His time ‘worming’ with his trombone as a young man, although he did not enjoy it, had given him an insight into the world of light music and particularly that of the wind band. His *First Suite in E♭* (Op. 28 [No. 1]) (1909) and *Second Suite in F* (Op. 28 [No. 2]) (1911) are among the most regularly featured pieces in the repertoire of modern wind bands. Imogen Holst states that he was writing ‘with the assurance of an experienced bandsman who knows exactly what the other players are going to enjoy’.<sup>43</sup> She adds that there were bandsmen ‘who long recalled the excitement of the first rehearsal in 1909’. The *Second Suite* was founded on folk melodies collected by Sharp and George Gardiner, and she believed that here Holst ‘was no longer defeated by the problem of how to avoid awkward joins when dealing with traditional tunes’.

The military band concert in the park, or the works band playing for the annual outing, was an important form of musical entertainment in the days before radio. The wind band provided a bridge between the world of classical music and popular culture. A subdivision of the genre, the brass band, can be considered as a working-class movement, at least at the time that Holst was composing.<sup>44</sup> Holst actually preferred writing for brass band, since he found it 'mellower and more flexible' than the military band.<sup>45</sup> His first composition specifically for brass band was the *Moorside Suite*, written in 1928 as a test piece for the championship competition at the National Brass Band Festival, which was held at Crystal Palace in September of that year. Although it does not use traditional English tunes, Holst has applied the lessons taken from English folk song to create a piece in three movements that is technically demanding while being artistically satisfying. Paul Hindmarsh writes: 'For the first time, the brass band was playing original tunes founded on modality rather than diatonic harmony: its origins were in folk song, and it unfolded entirely without contrivance.'<sup>46</sup>

Holst himself was a judge for the competition and in consequence heard the work played fifteen times, which he greatly enjoyed. He wrote a few days later to the editor of the *British Bandsman*, which had organized the event, to express his admiration for the high quality of musicianship on display.<sup>47</sup> The competition was won by the Black Dyke Mills Band. The *Moorside Suite* has since become a great favourite in the brass band repertoire. When Holst died, a tribute to him in *The Star* newspaper observed, 'Gustav Holst was a great friend to working men and did all he could to encourage the brass band movement.'<sup>48</sup> In recent years brass instruments have been successfully used by a number of prominent folk revival bands, including, for example, Home Service, Brass Monkey, and Bellowhead. One of the characteristics of brass music which gives it this cross-cultural appeal is that it tends to be melodic – and people do like a good tune.

Holst's idea that *Songs of the West* could be reworked was finally taken up in 1986 by publishers G. & M. Brand who commissioned the American composer James Curnow to transcribe the piece for wind band. Curnow is an experienced composer of more than two hundred works, mainly for brass and military bands. Geoffrey Brand conducted the first recorded performance of the new transcription, by the City of London Wind Ensemble, in 1988.<sup>49</sup> The work was recorded again in 1992 by the Western Band of the RAF under Flight Lieutenant D. J. G. Stubbs.<sup>50</sup> The RAF band version has, unfortunately, been reduced in length by the omission of two of the tunes, 'Cecily Sweet' and 'Death and the Lady'.<sup>51</sup> Neither of these CDs is now available, but new technology has come to the rescue and it is possible to download from the internet an enjoyable full-length version of Curnow's arrangement played by the Dutch band Harmonie De Volksgalm Zichen.<sup>52</sup>

Curnow's transcription is now being played and heard more frequently, particularly in the USA. In his article analysing the piece, John Darling, who has made a study of *Songs of the West*, describes it as 'an often overlooked masterpiece' and considers that 'it is technically and musically sophisticated, requiring a mature group for a proper performance'.<sup>53</sup> His article provides an analysis of the form and musical structure which reveals a complex piece of music with almost constant changes in tempo and ambiguous keys, reflecting the modal character of the tunes Holst used. The melodic structure is

also complex and impressive, particularly near the end, as Holst overlays his variations on 'The Marigold' with two other tunes ('Hal-an-Tow' and 'As I Walked Out') and then, briefly, with a fourth ('Old Adam'), before heading into the final straight with a measured 'Hal-an-Tow' which returns us to the starting point of the work.

### **A Somerset Rhapsody**

It is now time to trace the history of the other piece in the *Two Selections of Folk Songs*, that made from Cecil Sharp's collection and originally known as *A New Selection of Songs of Somerset*. The revised form of this was to become known as *A Somerset Rhapsody*. As with *Songs of the West*, the number of tunes was reduced from the second part of the *Two Selections*. In this case the reduction was more drastic, with the original ten tunes being cut to three: 'Sheep Shearer's Song', 'High Germany', and 'The True Lover's Farewell', with an additional variation of 'High Germany', collected by Sharp, introduced into the mix. This simplification was certainly a major factor in the success of *Somerset Rhapsody* in comparison with its more complex sibling.

The revised version of the *Somerset Rhapsody* was first performed in London in 1910 at the Queen's Hall by the New Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Edward Mason. Holst wrote in the score: 'This Rhapsody was written in 1906 at the request of Cecil Sharp, to whom it is dedicated.'<sup>54</sup> It was received favourably, with the critic of the *Daily Telegraph* writing, 'no more distinguished a piece has issued from a British pen for many a day'. The reviewer in the *Morning Post* offered the opinion, 'This is the work for which lovers of folk song have been waiting [...] the best disquisition on a folk-song that has been issued, and its successors will be awaited with interest.' However, Imogen Holst, writing in the 1940s, was more sanguine, describing the *Somerset Rhapsody* as 'a mixture of good and bad writing [...] though it has moments of great beauty'.<sup>55</sup> Holst considered this to be a turning point in his fortunes. In a letter written to the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1928 he wrote, 'its production by Edward Mason in 1910 was my first real success'.<sup>56</sup>

*A Somerset Rhapsody* was performed again, alongside its companion piece, *Songs of the West*, at Bath in November 1910 and, once more, a good description is given in the concert programme:

The melodies used in this Rhapsody are, with one exception, taken from Vols. I. and II. of 'Songs from Somerset'. By permission of Mr. Cecil Sharp the editor.

It opens with the 'Sheep-shearing Song', a long, plaintive melody suggestive of the loneliness of the country side. It is first played by the oboe and then by the violins in another key. Towards the end of the second time it is interrupted by distant martial music which leads into the well-known marching song 'High Germany' – 'O Polly love, O Polly, the route [*sic*] has now begun, And I must march away to the beating of the drum'. After this comes the 'True Lover's Farewell', played first by the 'cellos and then flutes and bassoons. The marching song breaks in again, and for a time the two are heard together until the march is played by the full orchestra, and followed by another tune to the same words. This tune is not published, but was given to the composer in MS. by Mr. Sharp.

The 'Farewell Song' is heard for the last time at first in an impassioned manner, then fading away, while the trombones mournfully play the opening 'Sheep-shearing Song.' It is taken up by the violins, but meanwhile the second 'High Germany' tune is heard as it were in the distance. It dies away and nothing is heard save the opening suggestion of the bare hillside.<sup>57</sup>

It has since had many other performances and has been recorded frequently, so that *A Somerset Rhapsody* is now one of the better known of Holst's works.

### Further Work with Folk Song

Although *Songs of the West* had faded into the sunset, Holst was encouraged by the success of *A Somerset Rhapsody* and continued his experiments with folk song. In 1909 he was invited, probably by Cecil Sharp, to arrange a selection of sixteen songs from among those collected by George Gardiner in Hampshire.<sup>58</sup> With typical modesty he wrote to Sharp, saying, 'I send you two arrangements from Dr Gardiner's folksongs in order for you to decide whether I am to arrange the Hampshire tunes for your Novello series or not. I have no wish to do this unless you are quite sure that you have not got anyone better. Personal feelings should not enter into these matters at all and I shall most cheerfully bow to your decision, whatever it may be' (Figure 4).<sup>59</sup>

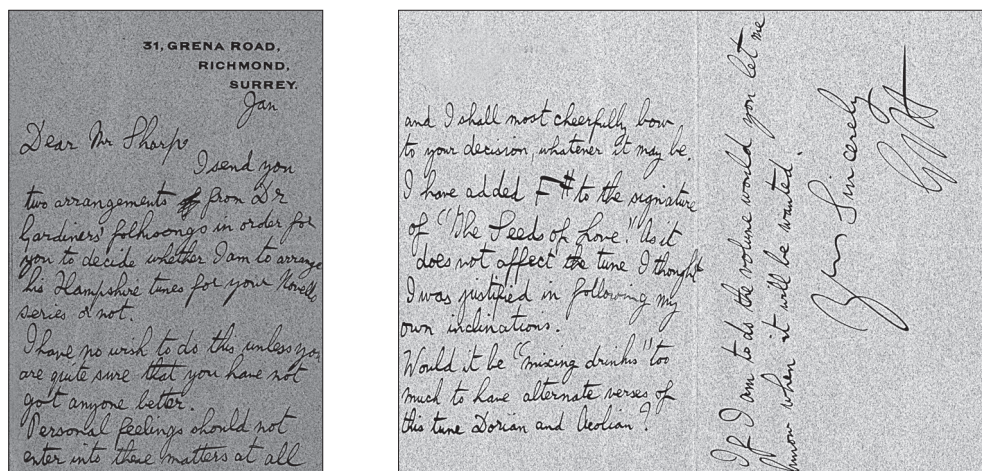


Figure 4  
Letter of Gustav Holst to Cecil Sharp, January 1909  
Courtesy of VWML

Holst did, of course, get the job. In the obituary of Holst that he wrote for the *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, Frank Howes described Holst's arrangements as 'all fire and ice', the balance of opulence and austerity enhancing the tune, rather than obscuring it.<sup>60</sup> Vaughan Williams wrote that Holst's arrangement of the songs from Gardiner's collection 'must have come as rather a shock to those accustomed to the unpretending harmonies of *English County Songs* or *Folk Songs from Somerset*'.<sup>61</sup>

The songs included:

1. Our Ship She Lies in Harbour (Roud 1011)
2. Abroad as I Was Walking (Roud 564)
3. Lord Dunwaters – ‘The King he wrote a long letter’ (Roud 89)
4. The Irish Girl – ‘Abroad as I was walking’ (Roud 308)
5. Young Reilly – ‘Young Reilly is my true love’s name’ (Roud 270)
6. The New Mown Hay – ‘As I walked forth one summer’s morn’ (Roud 2941)
7. The Willow Tree – ‘O take me to your arms, love’ (Roud 3294)
8. Beautiful Nancy – ‘As beautiful Nancy was a-walking one day’ (Roud 18525)
9. Sing Ivy – ‘My father gave me an acre of land’ (Roud 21093)
10. John Barleycorn – ‘There were three kings came from the north’ (Roud 164)
11. Bedlam City – ‘Down by the side of Bedlam City’ (Roud 968)
12. The Scolding Wife – ‘Some men they do delight in hounds’ (Roud 3295)
13. The Squire and the Thresher – ‘A nobleman lived in a village’ (Roud 19)
14. The Happy Stranger – ‘As I was a-walking one morning in spring’ (Roud 272)
15. Young Edwin in the Lowlands Low – ‘Come all you wild young people’ (Roud 182)
16. Yonder Sits a Fair Young Damsel (Roud 542)

In putting the collection together, Gardiner and Holst, like other publishers of folk songs, had to steer a course between authenticity and accessibility for an interested public. There is a single page from a letter from Gardiner to Holst in the Gardiner manuscript collection which hints at the difficulties that they had in getting some of the songs fit for publication.<sup>62</sup> Gardiner writes, for example, ‘Of the 5 doubtful songs, that which presents the most serious difficulty is “The streams of lovely Nancy”.’ Frank Purslow notes that this difficulty was resolved by using the text of ‘The Happy Stranger’.<sup>63</sup> In other cases, Purslow suggests that texts that Gardiner provided to Holst were from printed sources. He says that ‘Only “The Happy Stranger” has a traditional ring to it’, but there is no record of this text having been collected by Gardiner, or anyone else. Comparison of the text that Gardiner and Holst used with that of copies of the broadside ballad of ‘The Happy Stranger’ suggests that this, too, is an edited version of a printed source.

In his introduction to the published collection, Gardiner writes, ‘The melody of “The Willow Tree” has suggested special harmonic treatment, as it presents features not usually found in English folk-song.’ In this case, the problematic song was ‘The Banks of Green Willow’, for which a superb tune had been collected from David Clements of Basingstoke, with a fragmentary text.<sup>64</sup> In his letter, Gardiner suggests a broadside text of ‘The Willow Tree’ quoted by Logan as a possible text for ‘Broad as I was walking’. It must have subsequently been recognized that this was an even better fit with ‘The Banks of Green Willow’ tune. Comparison of the published tunes with the manuscripts available shows some minor changes and regularizing of the tunes. Purslow points out that the selection of four Ionian, two Mixolydian, and ten Dorian/Aeolian tunes cannot be said truly to represent the modal characteristics of English folk music – but it made for an interesting package.<sup>65</sup>

Gardiner’s songs clearly had some resonance with Holst because he was to return to them more than once in the future. The *Second Suite in F* (Op. 28 [No. 2]) (1911) for wind band, mentioned above, used a number of folk tunes taken from Gardiner and Sharp,

including 'Glorishears', 'Swansea Town', 'Claudy Banks', 'Song of the Blacksmith', and 'Dargason'. Holst had discovered 'Dargason' in Playford's *English Dancing Master*.<sup>66</sup> The tune dates from before the Reformation and is very compelling because, since it does not end on the key note, it seems to be unending. Holst used it as the finale of the *Second Suite*, blending it very successfully with 'Greensleeves'. Indeed, he was so pleased with the result that he set it again for orchestra in his *St Paul's Suite* of 1913.

Also in 1911, Holst was commissioned by the English Folk Dance Society (EFDS) to use his experience with military band music to score a number of morris dance tunes. These were to be used by Sharp in the programme that he was organizing for the Festival of Empire, held at Crystal Palace in July of that year.<sup>67</sup> This was a festival of sport and culture, and the forerunner of the Commonwealth Games. Sharp gave a series of lectures and organized demonstrations of songs and dances, which were performed by the children of the Brompton Oratory School and for which Holst's arrangements were intended. Sharp was also, along with Allan Gomme and Lady Gomme, one of the 'historical referees' for the 'London of Merrie England' section of the spectacular 'Pageant of London' which was staged as part of the festival.<sup>68</sup> This was a re-enactment of May and other customs of the time of Henry VIII, for which the music had been arranged by Vaughan Williams. In addition, Holst composed music for another of the sections of the pageant, 'The Danish Invasion', writing the battle music and two songs, 'Biarkmál' and 'In Praise of King Olaf'.<sup>69</sup> He had been working particularly hard and had strained his eyes, but said that he found scoring for military band something he could do even when very tired. The work provided the funds for a much-needed holiday, walking in Switzerland.<sup>70</sup>

*Six Choral Folk Songs* (Op. 36) (1916) was an unaccompanied setting for choir of five songs from Gardiner's collection, four from Hampshire ('The Song of the Blacksmith', 'I Sowed the Seeds of Love', 'There Was a Tree', and 'Swansea Town'), and one from Cornwall ('I Love my Love'). The sixth song was 'Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John' (otherwise 'The Evening Prayer'), from Sabine Baring-Gould's collection, which had been used in 1906 in the original *Two Selections*. This grouping of songs contains some lovely moments, particularly in 'I Love my Love' where the essential simplicity is made glorious by the harmonies that Holst has chosen.

A less successful venture was the *Phantasy Quartet on British Folk Songs*, which used four of Gardiner's Hampshire songs: 'Eggs in her Basket', 'The Female Farmer', 'The Outlandish Knight', and 'Claudy Banks'. This string quartet was performed at the Steinway Hall in November 1917, but Holst withdrew it from his list of compositions soon afterwards. The combination of six-eight jig and five-four love song looked acceptable on paper but was a confusion of sounds when played. He later regarded it as a 'guilty secret'. Imogen Holst wrote: 'The quartet sounds as if it had been written by a young and inexperienced student who had lost his heart to folk tunes but could do nothing with them beyond labelling them with the long suffering title of "Phantasy", and hoping it would cover a multitude of inadequacies.'<sup>71</sup> Holst's short opera *At the Boar's Head* (1924) was based on thirty-eight traditional tunes, taken mostly from Playford's seventeenth-century collection, to which Shakespeare's words were set.

There are also a number of other settings of folk songs in various manuscripts by Holst based on songs from the Sharp, Gardiner, and Broadwood collections, not all of

which were published. Holst also made use of folk song in his teaching, and a number of the arrangements of folk songs he made were, as he told Lucy Broadwood, 'written for Morleyites, schoolgirls and soldiers in Constantinople. I have also several others written by my pupils as I find this a good way of teaching composition.'<sup>72</sup> He also suggested to his students that they collect folk songs while they were on holiday. At least one, Jane Joseph, took up this challenge and collected a wassail song from Edward Lee in the Gower. The text for this song corresponds closely with that recorded in 1936 from Phil Tanner.<sup>73</sup> Jane Joseph acted as Holst's amanuensis for several years, writing a number of scores for him, including parts of *The Planets*. She died in 1929 at the age of thirty-five and, in 1931, Holst arranged 'The Gower Wassail' for choir as a memorial to her. She was also active in the EFDS. Holst described her as 'the best girl pupil I ever had'.<sup>74</sup>

Imogen Holst says that her father's love of folk music lasted all his life, but that he realized that he had to move on and not to indulge himself 'in an overdose of flattened-seventh mildness'.<sup>75</sup> However, despite his interest, Holst did not join the Folk-Song Society until 1924. Because of his friendship with Sharp he was more often associated with the EFDS. Sadly, their friendship is not well recorded. Indeed, Holst did not receive a mention in Cecil Sharp's biography until the third version was written by Maud Karpeles in 1967.<sup>76</sup> Holst attended a number of the EFDS summer schools and other events, and taught at some of them. In 1931 he was weary and wrote in a letter to Imogen Holst, 'Malvern is hot and steamy and I make no effort to be really awake except from 10.15 to 10.20 AM when I have to convert the conversation of about 350 people into singing [...] As I have one short job each morning and another each afternoon the day is spoilt for doing anything exciting so I don't do it – or anything else. And when it rains more than usual I go to bed [...] The garden here is perfect, and so is the quiet. And the people are dears.'<sup>77</sup>

In a letter to Sharp written in 1923 Holst thanked him for sending some tickets.<sup>78</sup> It is likely that these were for one of the performances at the EFDS summer festival, held at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, on 2–7 July. He tells Sharp, 'It will be a great treat for my 16 year old Imogen who, together with Jean Schofield, is introducing country dancing into her school – in fact she is reading a paper on the subject the same afternoon so this will be a fitting reward.' Imogen's school was, naturally enough, St Paul's Girls' School in Hammersmith, where her father taught. Jean Schofield (later Jean Fosbrooke) was a close friend and the two girls attended a number of EFDS summer schools together. During the first that she attended, in Aldeburgh, Imogen saw Cecil Sharp playing the piano for the dancing. She herself danced in a number of performances at EFDS events, and played the pipe and tabor at others.

### W. G. Whittaker

William Gillies Whittaker was another good friend of Holst's and, fortunately, there is a large body of surviving correspondence, mostly from Holst to Whittaker but with a few letters from Whittaker to Holst. These letters, which are in Glasgow University Library, have been edited for publication by Michael Short.<sup>79</sup> Whittaker was born in 1876 in Newcastle upon Tyne. He started to study science at Armstrong College

(then an outpost of the University of Durham but later to become Newcastle University), but switched to music and taught music at the college when he completed his studies. Apart from teaching, he was involved with a number of choirs in the city. He was appointed as principal of the Scottish National Academy of Music and Gardiner Professor of Music at the University of Glasgow in 1929.

Whittaker was also a folk song collector, having made a collection around Newcastle before 1911. He published the songs he had collected, along with pipe tunes, in his *North Country Ballads*.<sup>80</sup> He also wrote an essay on the 'Folk Songs of the North East'.<sup>81</sup> His best-known compositions include a choral setting of 'The Lyke-Wake Dirge', which Holst admired, and a piano quintet, 'Among the Northumbrian Hills'. The version of 'Blow the Winds Southerly' that he collected was made famous by Kathleen Ferrier.

Holst met Whittaker in Newcastle when he conducted a performance of *Hymns from the Rig Veda* by one of Whittaker's choirs in Newcastle. They became good friends and Imogen Holst records the pleasure engendered by one of his visits to stay with them.<sup>82</sup> While the relationship of 'critical friends' was probably not as strong between Whittaker and Holst as it was between Holst and Vaughan Williams, since it lacked the regular 'field days', there was a frequent exchange of ideas, advice, and encouragement, as well as copies of new work. They included each others' compositions in their teaching and concerts, and Holst gave Whittaker practical help in making his work better known. Their exchanges included Whittaker's arrangements of folk songs, and Holst was to make use of a number of these songs in his own compositions. In April 1916 Holst wrote to him, 'I like the two folksongs very much and will undertake to use at least 100 of both [i.e. printed copies for choir] within 12 months of their publication.'<sup>83</sup>

When Whittaker's book of folk songs was published in October 1921, Holst wrote:

The books of songs make a feast indeed. Thanks 1000 times. I have not heard the piano parts yet and have not even looked at them much yet because the tunes have fascinated me.

Would you allow me to murder two or three of them in a ballet for Chicago? It sounds mixed but I got the books and a little commission from the USA about the same time and your tunes ran through my head when I thought of the ballet. But I shall ill-treat them disgracefully.<sup>84</sup>

This ballet was *The Lure*. It was Holst's response to a commission from a dance company in Chicago, based on a scenario by Alice Barney. The longest dance in the piece is based on a Northumbrian folk tune that Whittaker had collected. The commission was given to Holst at short notice and, as a result, he borrowed heavily from other work he was doing at the time. In the event, the ballet was never staged, although its music has been published and recorded.<sup>85</sup>

### ***The Morning of the Year***

There is another venture by Holst into the world of English folk traditions which is of particular interest, even though the product might be regarded as flawed. In 1927 Holst composed the music for a 'choral ballet', *The Morning of the Year*, which was performed as a fund-raiser for the Cecil Sharp Memorial Fund. This interesting project was inspired by Douglas Kennedy, who provided the scenario and also arranged the

traditional dances that were performed during the ballet. Holst's friend Stuart Wilson wrote the words for the choral sections of the piece. This was the second of these rather strange hybrids to be composed by Holst, the first having been *The Golden Goose*, based on a tale of the brothers Grimm, performed two years earlier. In his notes for a CD that includes *The Morning of the Year*, as well as *The Golden Goose*, Raymond Head states that the Scottish composer Granville Bantock was the first to use the term 'choral ballet', and suggests that there was a conscious attempt on Holst's part to link back to the 'Ballets' of Thomas Weelkes and Thomas Morley, which combined dance and song.<sup>86</sup>

*The Morning of the Year* has the distinction of having been the first piece of music to be commissioned by the music department of the newly formed British Broadcasting Corporation. Its first performance was as part of a concert given at the Royal Albert Hall by the National Chorus and Orchestra, which was broadcast live, on the evening of 17 March 1927. It was sandwiched between two pieces by Arthur Honneger and the two composers each conducted their own works. The reviewer for *The Times* left the concert before Honneger's *Pacific 231* had completed its journey, but was not particularly kind about either of the preceding performances. Of Holst's piece he wrote, 'about the only thing we can venture to say is that it is full of good tunes treated in the ingenious, reiterative style which the composer has made his own. As "The Morning of the Year" is really a ballet, and was, of course, given without action, and as the words of the choruses could not be heard from the other end of the Albert Hall, we came away with only a vague notion as to what it was all about, but with the feeling that we should probably enjoy it if it were given with its proper stage accompaniment.'<sup>87</sup>

The ballet was first performed with its dances at a private concert held at the Royal College of Music on 1 June 1927. The dances were performed by members of the EFDS under the leadership of Douglas Kennedy. The *Times* critic was more impressed by the music than the dances, although he considered the performance of the EFDS dancers to be 'very finished'. He felt, though, that 'before an art-ballet can be created out of our folk dances, a more elaborate technique will have to be evolved'.<sup>88</sup> The *Daily Telegraph* critic was more enthusiastic, describing the outcome as 'very nearly a perfect art form', although he did concede that some aspects of the performance needed further work.<sup>89</sup> This performance was, in effect, an open dress rehearsal for the public performance at the Scala Theatre later in the month.

This was not the first time that EFDS dancers had taken part in the performance of a ballet, since members of the Cambridge branch had performed traditional dances in the ballet *Old King Cole* by Vaughan Williams at Trinity College in June 1923. In 1922, a similar group from Oxford had danced in Cyril Rootham's opera *The Two Sisters*. Cecil Sharp had admired the dancing of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes before the war and saw the potential for incorporating English folk dance steps into classical ballet. As a first essay in this he worked with Harvey Granville-Barker on his production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1914, for which he provided music and dances, mostly based on traditional tunes.<sup>90</sup> Reviewing the performance, George Butterworth wrote, 'On the whole, those interested in the revival of our folk-dances may have good reason to feel satisfied with this first serious attempt to adapt them for stage purposes.'<sup>91</sup> Sharp continued to promote these ideas after the war, hoping that interest in the folk dance

movement would lead to the creation of a new English ballet company at a time when the art of ballet and dance in England was in a very poor state.<sup>92</sup> This vision was, in part, responsible for the drive towards a high quality of folk dancing in the EFDS. Sharp supported other EFDS members, too, notably Douglas Kennedy, in taking further steps towards a form of ballet based on English folk dance. Kennedy was involved in a further project in 1923 when he produced two short ballets, one set to a Haydn quartet, the other based on 'Sumer is icumen in'. These were performed, at Sharp's invitation, at the EFDS Aldeburgh summer school. It is likely that Kennedy was also involved in aspects of Holst's production of *The Golden Goose*.<sup>93</sup>

*The Morning of the Year* was a more ambitious project, in which the steps and figures of the traditional dances were first demonstrated in their natural state before they were performed in combination with Holst's music and Steuart Wilson's words. Vaughan Williams was involved too, and conducted the dances while Holst conducted his own work. *The Times* complimented the EFDS dancers on their 'high degree of perfection', but felt that Holst's music was 'too uncompromising to express the happy character of the dance'.<sup>94</sup> Likewise, the *Western Morning News*, although it praised many aspects of the performance, felt that the music was 'too complicated by experimental harmonic progressions to complete this impression of youthful simplicity and primitive passion that is conveyed by the poetry and dancing'.<sup>95</sup> Imogen Holst says that her father enjoyed working on it and that he thought that 'there were moments in the dancing that were really beautiful'.<sup>96</sup> Reflecting on the performance just before her death in 1984, she wrote: 'I still feel just as embarrassed by the printed synopsis in which the Voice of Nature summons the Youths and Maidens to the mating dance, and the Youths and Maidens "abandon themselves" and "find their mates" [...] The music, however, is decidedly worth hearing.'<sup>97</sup> She reissued the piece as *Dances from the Morning of the Year* in an orchestral score, 'leaving out the chorus, and banishing any mention of the synopsis, so that the music can lead a life of its own'.

### Sabine Baring-Gould

There are a few ghosts that haunt this banquet. The largest of these spectres is that of Sabine Baring-Gould, the collector and editor of the songs that were used by Holst in compiling his *Songs of the West*. His name was hardly mentioned throughout the history of the venture and not at all after 1906. If you were to read only the newspaper accounts of the piece you might well assume that the songs were all from Cecil Sharp's collection. You might even be surprised to learn that they came from Devon and Cornwall, rather than from Somerset. The notes to the recording of the Curnow wind band arrangement of *Songs of the West* by the Western Band of the RAF describe the piece as 'based on songs mainly from the Somerset Area'.

Sabine Baring-Gould (1834–1924) was an archetypal Victorian polymath, despite the erratic education he had received while his family was travelling in Europe during his childhood. He became one of the most prolific authors of his time, writing on religious, topographical, and antiquarian matters. He was the author of many well-loved hymns, as well as being one of the most popular novelists of his day. Baring-Gould had started to collect the folk songs of Devon and Cornwall in 1888, assisted by Henry

Fleetwood Sheppard, rector of Thurnscoe in Yorkshire, and by Frederick Bussell, a fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford. Over a period of some fifteen years, Baring-Gould and his colleagues amassed a collection of songs and published two books, *Songs and Ballads of the West* (in four parts, 1889–91) and *A Garland of Country Song* (1895).<sup>98</sup> These collections have been criticized for their degree of rewriting, but, while Baring-Gould recognized the significance of his editorial interventions, he had little choice if the songs were to be acceptable to his publisher and his public. To remedy this, Baring-Gould gave his original notebooks, and a fair copy of over two hundred of the songs, to the library in Plymouth for the benefit of future music students. In 1992 a collection of papers was discovered which included his personal fair copy, comprising over 650 songs.<sup>99</sup>

Baring-Gould's great achievement as a song collector lies in the fact that he was the first to undertake a collection of English folk song in a systematic and comprehensive way. He also exceeded many of the collectors who followed him in the quality of his documentation of the singers and in the way in which he recognized the importance of their contribution to the process. Baring-Gould lived until a few days short of his ninetieth birthday, in January 1924. Sadly, by that time he was largely forgotten by the public, and, although his hymns lived on, his novels were forgotten, his travelogues dated, and his hagiographies had become unfashionable. A new generation of folk song collectors had begun their work and a revival of interest in English folk music had started, under the influence, particularly, of those who took up Cecil Sharp's cause after his death.

At the time that Holst was composing *Two Selections of Folk Songs*, in 1905–06, Cecil Sharp and Sabine Baring-Gould, having worked closely together on the revised edition of *Songs of the West*, which was published in October 1905, were preparing a second joint publication, *English Folk Songs for Schools*, which was to be published in 1907. Sharp had 'discovered' English folk song in the summer of 1903 and, after an initial burst of collecting, started to talk to the practitioners who had been operating in the field before him, particularly Sabine Baring-Gould and Lucy Broadwood. He visited Baring-Gould at his home in Devon on a number of occasions and collected songs with him in the neighbourhood.<sup>100</sup> In 1916 Baring-Gould's wife died, and this marked the beginning of his decline. At the same time, Sharp was spending much of his time in the USA collecting songs and, upon his return, was fully engaged in the promotion of folk song and dance through his teaching and lectures. Towards the end of his life it is clear that Baring-Gould harboured some resentment towards Sharp, feeling that his own contribution had been subsumed into that of Sharp. It is difficult to believe that this was what Sharp intended. He certainly recognized the value of Baring-Gould's work, describing him as the man who first interested him in folk music and writing that his work was 'the first serious and sustained attempt to collect the traditional songs of the English peasantry'.<sup>101</sup> Nonetheless, he does appear to have been careless in his treatment of Baring-Gould and the songs that he collected.

I think it unlikely that Holst and Baring-Gould ever met and there is certainly no record of their having done so. Neither has anything about the performance of Holst's composition been found in Baring-Gould's memoirs or manuscripts. It seems probable that all the arrangements for the production of *Songs of the West* were made between Sharp and Holst directly, and that it is quite possible that Baring-Gould did not even know about it.

Sharp probably felt that, as music editor, he had the right to do this, particularly since there were no song texts involved and the majority of the arrangements were his own.<sup>102</sup> Holst was certainly aware of Baring-Gould's work and produced a setting of his most famous hymn, 'Onward, Christian Soldiers', to the tune 'Prince Rupert's March' from Playford.<sup>103</sup>

Baring-Gould would have seen the selection that he had included in his own book *Songs of the West* as being positioned mainly for consumption in the home, and his own stage productions were in the area of light music or musical comedy. He could be said to have moved closer to what might be described as 'serious music' with the opera based on his novel *Red Spider*, for which Engelbert Humperdinck and Hubert Parry had been approached before the Scottish composer Learmont Drysdale was finally selected to provide the music for Baring-Gould's libretto. Baring-Gould had reservations about Drysdale's music-writing, remarking in a letter to Lucy Broadwood in 1898, 'I fear the music is very modern, but it is good of its kind.'<sup>104</sup> Baring-Gould does not have a great deal to say about his personal preferences in music, but he might have had a similar reaction to Holst's compositions. We do know that he travelled to Bayreuth to hear Wagner, whom he admired, so they did have that in common. But, sadly, we will never know what he might have thought of Holst's treatment of 'his' songs.

### The Singers

The other ghosts are those of the men and women who sang the songs for Baring-Gould and his colleagues. Their intellectual and creative property had been given by them in the hope that the old songs that they loved would be passed on to future generations. Baring-Gould certainly recognized the implicit contract made with them, as did Cecil Sharp. It might be considered that taking the tunes away from their original words and context broke that contract. Some might even go so far as to consider it an act of cultural vandalism – though that view would have deprived us of some wonderful music from the likes of Holst, Grainger, and Vaughan Williams.

Michael Kennedy has said that Vaughan Williams did not enjoy the act of collecting songs and was awkward in the company of the country people who sang for him.<sup>105</sup> The success of collectors such as Sharp and Baring-Gould was, in large part, due to the high degree of rapport they enjoyed with people of a different social class and way of life. Holst had chosen not to collect English folk songs himself (although he had noted folk tunes in Algeria in 1908 and used them in *Beni Mora*). Any experience of collecting was gained only at second hand, through his friends Vaughan Williams, Sharp, Whittaker, and Grainger. The only singer that we have any evidence of his meeting was the man who looked after his garden in Thaxted, and we do not know his name or what he sang. In these circumstances it is not, perhaps, surprising that Holst did not recognize the debt that he owed to the original singers, or that he made no explicit acknowledgement of them as people. It may be a reflection, too, on the attitudes that prevailed in the Folk-Song Society at the time, made up as it was of music theorists, composers, and well-intentioned amateurs. These attitudes began to change during the early part of the twentieth century and the man who catalysed that change was Cecil Sharp, although the Novello series *Folk Songs of England*, which included Holst's arrangements of Gardiner's Hampshire songs, gave no information about the people from whom they had been collected.

So, let us name the original singers from whom Baring-Gould heard the songs that Holst used and identify other sources where appropriate (Tables 1 and 2).<sup>106</sup>

**Table 1**  
Tunes included in Holst's revised *Songs of the West*

Title	Source
Hal-an-Tow or Helston Furry Dance (no. 24) arr. J. Matthews	Sent to Baring-Gould by J. Matthews, St Austell, Cornwall, as taken down from local singers. In <i>Songs of the West</i> (1905) the arrangement is attributed to Matthews. (P 3, 69 (24)).
Henry Martyn (no. 53) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Taken down from Roger Luxton, agricultural labourer, Halwill, north Devon. (P 1, 122 (53)).
Cicely Sweet (no. 35) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Baring-Gould notes: 'Sent me by J. S. Hurrell, Kingsbridge, Devon, as sung some 50 years ago by Mr A. Haloran, Schoolmaster, a collector of old Devon songs. 1888.' (P 1, 84 (35)).
On a May Morning So Early (no. 73) (As I Walked Out) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Baring-Gould obtained this song from a number of singers, but the tune he used was heard from Edmund Fry, thatcher, Lydford, Devon. (P 1, 155(73)).
Old Adam the Poacher (no. 120) (Old Adam Was a Poacher) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Tune taken down from William Andrew, farmer, Sheepstor, Devon. Andrew was a fiddler who played for village dances and this was one of his tunes, attached to a song of which he recalled only parts. (P 3, 47 (420)).
Death and the Lady (no. 99) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Taken down by Baring-Gould from Roger Hannaford, agricultural labourer, South Widecombe, Devon, May 1890. (P 1, 197 (99)).
The Marigold (no. 111) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	'The Marigold' was an addition to the 1905 edition of <i>Songs of the West</i> . The tune used was that of 'Come All You Worthy Christians', collected by Sharp in Baring-Gould's company, 12 August 1904, during the first of several visits to Lewtrenchard, Baring-Gould's home. Sharp and Baring-Gould used the tune to carry an old Cornish ballad which had been published by Davies Gilbert in 1830. <sup>107</sup> (Song text P 3, 227 (530); tune P 2, 61 (144)).

**Table 2**  
Tunes included in Holst's *Two Selections of Folk Songs*  
but not in *Songs of the West*

Title	Source
Paul Jones (no. 108) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Taken down from William Horne, general labourer, Plympton, Devon, 14 December 1894. (P 3, 176 (496)).
The Evening Prayer (no. 121) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Collected by Baring-Gould from an unnamed old woman in Tavistock Workhouse, Devon. (P 2, 254 (252)).
Strawberry Fair (no. 68) arr. H. Fleetwood Sheppard	Taken down from John Masters, agricultural labourer, Bradstone, Devon. (P 1, 147 (68)).
Down by a River Side (no. 84) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Taken down from James Townsend, carpenter, Holne, Devon. Baring-Gould notes: 'A song of his grandfather's, who was clerk at Holne for 50 years, & d. over 80, in 1883.' (P 1, 174 (84)).
The Hostess's Daughter (no. 70) arr. H. Fleetwood Sheppard	Taken down from John Masters, agricultural labourer, Bradstone, Devon. (P 1, 150 (70)).
Three Jovial Welshmen (no. 75) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	Although in the notes to <i>Songs of the West</i> (1905) Baring-Gould states that this song was taken down from William Nankivell, quarryman, Merrivale Bridge, manuscript copies confirm that it was in fact from William Fry, thatcher, Lydford, Devon. (P 2, 47 (135)).
Widdicombe Fair (no. 16) arr. Cecil J. Sharp	This version of the song, which was widely spread throughout Dartmoor and west Devon, was sent to Baring-Gould by W. F. Collier, Esq., Woodtown, Devon. (P 1, 372 (331)).

Represented in this list we see a group of ordinary men who had some very fine music in their heads. Although Baring-Gould did collect songs from a number of women, there is only one included in this list and unfortunately we do not know her name. This is particularly sad because the song she gave us was 'The Evening Prayer', otherwise known as 'Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John', which is one of the small gems in Baring-Gould's song collection.

This song is now well known, particularly from Holst's arrangement of it, but at the time it was something of a curiosity with its simple but striking tune, being one of very few English folk songs in the Phrygian mode. As noted above, this was a 'survivor' from *Songs of the West* which Holst set for choir as one of his *Six Choral Folk Songs* (Op. 36) (1916). It had appeared for the first time in the 1905 edition of Baring-Gould's *Songs of the West*, with an accompaniment by Cecil Sharp. Baring-Gould wrote in his notes to the song: 'The tune, as it stands, is in the Major mode, and is so harmonised. But if the last note were G instead of E $\flat$  – as, indeed, it is in the two previous repetitions of the same phrase – the melody would then be in the Phrygian mode.'<sup>108</sup> In his copy of the book, Holst has pencilled in that change to the final note of the tune from E $\flat$  to G, and this is the way he presented it in its choral setting.

It is one of the tunes that Baring-Gould noted himself and the version in his Rough Copy Manuscript shows the final note as E $\flat$ , as printed in *Songs of the West* (1905). We can be reasonably certain, in this instance, that Baring-Gould accurately recorded what he heard from the old woman. It has been suggested to me that, at some stage, she had heard it sung in harmony and had remembered one of the parts.<sup>109</sup> As musical editor for *Songs of the West* Sharp accepted the major version, but he clearly changed his view because he used 'Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John' to illustrate one of the lectures he gave in Somerset in 1907, saying that it 'was a sure means of disabusing the popular mind of the false idea that folk music was inferior. It was in the Phrygian mode and of serious character.'<sup>110</sup> The modal variant has become the accepted version of this beautiful, wistful prayer, which has delighted thousands over the years since it was published.

## Conclusion

There was a tendency until relatively recently to regard Holst as a 'one-hit wonder'. *The Planets* is acknowledged as one of the major works of English classical music. Over the past twenty years, however, Holst's work has been re-evaluated and it is now recognized that there is much in his output that delights and much else that astounds with its originality. As a teacher he was required to produce many compositions for use by his students and, like Vaughan Williams, he was always willing to compose for amateur performances. Many of these 'minor works' are of high quality and considerable interest.

Arrangements of folk songs were an important element of Holst's work, and some of them, particularly *Somerset Rhapsody* and *Six Choral Folk Songs*, are regulars in the concert halls. But it is the wider influence of folk song on his composition that needs to be considered as the more important consequence of his long-term love for folk music. It was from folk song that he learned about simplicity and economy and, like Vaughan

Williams, the use of modes and freedom in rhythm, and he also learned the importance of melody. It should not be forgotten that he gave back more than he took, through his teaching and his support for the folk song and dance movement at large, and particularly through the teaching and compositions that he undertook specifically for the EFDS. This active interest was reflected in the obituary published in *EFDS News*.<sup>111</sup>

It is interesting to reflect on the support given by the EFDS in the first half of the twentieth century to the use of folk music in classical compositions and, particularly, to the use of traditional dance in the ballet. This was in part due to Cecil Sharp's personal interest in the use of English traditional dance forms in ballet. The official position of the society at that time is clarified in an article titled 'Fifteen Years of Progress' which appeared in the *Journal of the English Folk Dance Society* in 1927. Referring specifically to Vaughan Williams's 'Old King Cole', it states: 'The Society has always taken a benevolent interest in experiments of this kind, and it looks forward to the emergence of art-forms based on the folk-dances. But the Society itself, apart from its individual members, is restricted in its activities to the re-establishment of the traditional art, and its part in relation to developments is rather to provide a basis than to originate or direct.'<sup>112</sup>

In the second half of the twentieth century young composers moved on to try out new possibilities. Folk music became 'old hat' with them, even while a new wave of performers with guitars took up folk music as their own. The shock waves created by electric folk in the 1970s were another stage in this development. Ashley Hutchings speaks of 'trying to make real English rock music', for which his inspiration was English traditional music, thus echoing from a different perspective the aims of Vaughan Williams and Holst.<sup>113</sup> Another English performer-composer, John Boden, is likewise creating complex music based on traditional song with the group Bellowhead. English traditional song has the strength to be treated in myriad ways without losing its fundamental qualities of simplicity and directness.

Returning, finally, to where this story began, we will never, it seems, be able to hear Holst's *Selections of Songs of the West* in the form in which it was first played in 1906. We do, though, have the possibility of hearing James Curnow's wind band arrangement which, it is to be hoped, will be played more frequently by bands in Holst's own country in the future. And one day, perhaps, the full orchestral arrangement of the revised *Songs of the West* as it was played in 1909 might be heard again. It would be a tribute to Holst, Baring-Gould, Vaughan Williams, Sharp, and all those other pioneers of the early days who saw a way to create a truly English music out of the songs of the people of England – and particularly to those men and women of Devon and Cornwall who gave such treasures to Baring-Gould and Holst.

### Acknowledgements

I am grateful for help received from a number of people in preparing this paper. Writer and Holst expert Alan Gibbs kindly pointed me towards the right trail when I started my research and made a number of helpful comments on a draft of this article. The staff at Somerset Studies Library in Taunton helped me to find the newspaper reviews of the first Bath concert. Laura Kinnear and her colleagues at the Holst Birthplace Museum let me rifle through their books and manuscripts. Vic Gammon made a number of helpful

suggestions and gave me some useful references. Rosemary Upton tried on my behalf to prise information about the concerts from the citizens of Bath. I am grateful to my good friend and colleague Paul Wilson for a number of discussions about modes in folk song, from which each of us took away something of value. John Darling generously sent me a copy of his analysis of the wind band arrangement of *Songs of the West*. And, as ever, the staff at the VWML and the British Library dug deeply into dark places to find manuscripts that I needed to consult. I am also grateful to Roy Palmer, Tom Brown, and Bob Askew for help and advice along the way.

The Holst Birthplace Museum provided the photographs of the invitation card for the 1909 Delhi Concert and of the cartoon portrait of Gustav Holst by William Rothenstein. The latter is a recent acquisition and is reproduced here for the first time. The British Library gave permission for the inclusion of the photograph of the first page of the manuscript score of *Songs of the West*, and the VWML for the inclusion of the letter to Cecil Sharp. In both cases the Holst Foundation gave its assent to the use of these items, in which it holds the copyright.

Finally, Shan Graebe, whose practical help and active support made all the difference. Thank you all.

## Appendix

### Letters from Gustav Holst to Cecil Sharp, Lucy Broadwood, and George Gardiner

(London, VWML, Cecil J. Sharp MSS, Correspondence, Various, Box 2; London, VWML, Lucy Etheldred Broadwood MSS, LEB/6/23; London, EFDSS Archives, George Gardiner Collection, GG/6/3)

#### Letter 1

31, Grena Road,  
Richmond  
Surrey  
Jan [1909]

Dear Mr Sharp

I send you two arrangements from Dr Gardiner's folksongs in order for you to decide whether I am to arrange the Hampshire tunes for your Novello series or not. I have no wish to do this unless you are quite sure that you have not got anyone better. Personal feelings should not enter into these matters at all and I shall most cheerfully bow to your decision, whatever it may be.

I have added F# to the signature of 'The Seeds of Love'. As it does not affect the tune I thought I was justified in following my own inclinations.

Would it be 'mixing drinks' too much to have alternating verses of this tune Dorian and Aeolian?

If I am to do the volume would you let me know when it will be wanted.

Yours Sincerely  
GVH

#### Letter 2

32, Gunterstone Road  
Baron's Court, W. 14.  
June 29 [1923]

Dear Sharp

Thank you very much for the tickets. It will be a great treat for my 16 year old Imogen who, together with Jean Schofield, is introducing country dancing into her school – in fact she is reading a paper on the subject the same afternoon so this will be a fitting reward.

Yours Ever  
Gustav Holst

**Letter 3**

St. Paul's Girls' School,  
 Brook Green,  
 Hammersmith, W. 6.  
 Nov 23 1919

Dear Miss Broadwood

At last I have a chance of writing.

The Somerset Rhapsody is in MS so is the string suite. The former (written in 1907) is founded on tunes from Sharp's collections, the latter (1913) has original tunes excepting the finale, which is based on the Dargason.<sup>114</sup>

The only other real folksong things of mine are 'Songs of the West' a fantasia for orchestra (1907) (MS) on tunes from B Gould's book and some MS orchestral arrangements of tunes which I have written for Morleyites, schoolgirls and soldiers in Constantinople. I have also several others written by my pupils as I find this a good way of teaching composition.

Amongst my settings are

Banks of the Nile

John Barleycorn

I'll love my love

Our ship she lies in harbour

Spanish ladies

I suppose the two hymn arrangements I am sending you are not really folksongs.

'This have I done' is my own tune – I don't like the traditional one.

Lots of my things are folksongs in character but as far as I know the tunes are mine. I enclose some of them also copies of the 6 choral folksongs.

Could you lend me Purcell's sacred music?

Yours sincerely

G T Holst

**Letter 4**

[On paper from the Waverly Hydropathic Establishment, Melrose.

No date, but likely to be 1909; the first page of this letter has not been located in the VWML collection.]

A famous fermour, as you shall hear  
 He had two sons, one daughter dear,  
 By a servant man was much admired  
 None in the world she loved so dear

—  
 How would this text do for the tune of 'Broad as I was walking: –

'The Willow Tree'

1.

O take me to your arms, Love,  
For keen the wind does blow,  
O take me to your arms, Love  
For bitter is my woe.  
She hears me not, she cares not  
Nor will she list to me,  
Whilst here I lie alone to die  
Beneath the Willow tree

2.

My love has wealth and beauty,  
The rich attend her door,  
My love has wealth and beauty  
And I, alas! am poor.  
The ribbons fair that bound her hair  
Is all that's left to me  
Whilst here I lie alone to die  
Beneath the willow tree

3.

I once had gold and silver,  
I thought them without end,  
I once had gold and silver  
And thought I had a friend.  
My wealth is lost, my friend is false,  
My love he stole from me.  
And now I lie alone to die  
Beneath the willow tree

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These verses are reprinted by Logan from a broadside of W. Armstrong, Banestre Street, (Liverpool). One would naturally suppose that they are non-copyright.

As to 'Pretty Nancy of Y.' I shall let you hear, as soon as I have a reply from Mr. Gamblin.

Of the 5 doubtful songs, that which presents the most serious difficulty is 'The streams of lovely Nancy'. The text would have to be rewritten or a new text found. 'Broad as' wd. do with the text given above. The 'Pretty Nancy' difficulty may be removed by Mr. Gamblin. The text of 'Our ship' wd. do with slight modification. Guyer's selection of verses from 'The dawning of the day' wd. pass muster. I shall write for his selection, if you wish.

Yrs. sincerely

George B. Gardiner

*Gustav Von Holst Esq.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Michael Short, *Gustav Holst: The Man and his Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 64, n. 33. This echoes Parry's comment in his inaugural lecture to the Folk-Song Society: 'True style comes not from the individual but from the products of crowds of fellow-workers, who sift, and try, and try again, till they have found the thing that suits their native taste'. Sir Hubert Parry, 'Inaugural Address', *JFSS*, 1.1 (1899), 1–3 (p. 3).

<sup>2</sup> Cheltenham, Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1905–1910 (vol. 3), p. 58, programme card for concert at Government House, Delhi, 8 October 1909, sent as a postcard to Holst at 10 The Terrace, Barnes.

<sup>3</sup> Parry, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> These are not, actually, all Scottish and are certainly not all folk songs. The titles include, for example, 'Sally in our Alley', by Henry Carey.

<sup>5</sup> Ralph Vaughan Williams, *National Music and Other Essays*, 2nd edn, rev. by Michael Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. v.

<sup>6</sup> Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!: A Study of Music in Decline* (London: Faber and Faber, 1934), p. 164.

<sup>7</sup> The producer of the opera at the Cheltenham Corn Exchange in February 1893 was D'Arcy Ferris, who, in 1885, formed the Bidford Morris. See Roy Judge, 'D'Arcy Ferris and the Bidford Morris', *FMJ*, 4.5 (1984), 443–80 (p. 470). At that time Ferris called himself D'Arcy de Ferrars (Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, 2005.155, concert programme for *Lansdowne Castle; or, The Sorcerer of Tewkesbury*, 7 February 1893).

<sup>8</sup> Edward Mason was killed in action in 1915 at the age of thirty-seven. He had been a student at the Royal College of Music and was assistant music master at Eton College until the outbreak of war. His concerts at the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, were an important influence on the development of English music at the beginning of the twentieth century.

<sup>9</sup> [Thomas Percy], *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, consisting of old heroic ballads, songs, and other pieces of our earlier poets, together with some few of later date*, 4th edn, 3 vols (London: F. and C. Rivington, 1794), I, 62–78.

<sup>10</sup> The Foxearth and District Local History Society, "I Ring for the General Dance": Gustav Holst and Thaxted' <<http://www.foxearth.org.uk/holst.html>> [accessed 8 February 2010].

<sup>11</sup> Short, p. 158.

<sup>12</sup> William Sandys, *Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern* (London: Richard Beckley, 1833), pp. 110–12.

<sup>13</sup> London, VWML, Lucy Etheldred Broadwood MSS, LEB/6/23, Gustav Holst to Lucy Broadwood, 23 November 1919.

<sup>14</sup> [Michael Howard], 'I Ring for the General Dance', *JEFDS*, 6.1 (1949), 20–21.

<sup>15</sup> Imogen Holst, *Gustav von Holst: A Biography*, 2nd edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 27.

<sup>16</sup> Gustav Holst, *Letters to W. G. Whittaker*, ed. by Michael Short (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Press, 1974), p. 85 (letter of 7 September 1924).

<sup>17</sup> First performed in New York, 10 June 1939, the piece was played at Vaughan Williams's funeral in Westminster Abbey.

- <sup>18</sup> Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 19.
- <sup>19</sup> Vaughan Williams recorded the name as he heard it, 'Pottipher', and that is how it appears in many records. The baptismal register shows him as Charles Potiphar. See Sue Cubbin, *That Precious Legacy: Ralph Vaughan Williams and Essex Folk Song* (Chelmsford: Essex Record Office, 2006).
- <sup>20</sup> Vaughan Williams, *National Music and Other Essays*, p. 46.
- <sup>21</sup> Imogen Holst, *The Great Composers: Holst* (London: Faber and Faber, 1974), p. 36.
- <sup>22</sup> Kennedy, p. 29.
- <sup>23</sup> Imogen Holst, 'Cecil Sharp and the Music and Music-Making of the Twentieth Century', *JEFDS*, 8.4 (1959), p. 189–90 (p. 189).
- <sup>24</sup> Imogen Holst, 'Cecil Sharp', p. 190.
- <sup>25</sup> Stephen Johnson, 'Vaughan Williams and English Folk Music', paper presented at 'Vaughan Williams in Spring', Down Ampney church, 5 May 2008 (from notes made by Shan Graebe).
- <sup>26</sup> Holst to Lucy Broadwood, 23 November 1919.
- <sup>27</sup> Roy Judge, 'The "Country Dancers" in the Cambridge *Comus* of 1908', *Folklore*, 110 (1999), 25–38 (p. 29).
- <sup>28</sup> Short, p. 64.
- <sup>29</sup> Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1905–1910 (vol. 3), p. 18, programme for Bath Pump Room concert, 6 February 1906.
- <sup>30</sup> 'The Pump Room Concerts', *Keene's Bath Journal*, 10 February 1906 (microfilm copy in Taunton, Somerset Studies Library).
- <sup>31</sup> 'Somerset Folk Songs at the Pump Room', *Bath Chronicle*, 8 February 1906 (microfilm copy in Somerset Studies Library).
- <sup>32</sup> Some sources cite these as Op. 21A and Op. 21B, respectively.
- <sup>33</sup> Oxford House was a university settlement associated with Keble College, Oxford, providing 'smoke and talk' facilities for working men. Excelsior Hall was a swimming bath which was floored over for concerts (and boxing matches). It was converted into a cinema in 1921 and demolished to make way for housing in 1969.
- <sup>34</sup> Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1905–1910 (vol. 3), p. 56, programme for Excelsior Hall concert, 11 November 1910. Holst's scrapbook contains no reviews for this concert.
- <sup>35</sup> Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1905–1910 (vol. 3), pp. 78–79, programme for Bath Pump Room concerts, 17 November 1910.
- <sup>36</sup> 'Bath Pump Room Concerts', *Bath Chronicle*, 18 November 1910, in Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1905–1910 (vol. 3), p. 79. *Dear Little Denmark* was a musical comedy which opened at the Prince of Wales Theatre on 1 September 1909 and ran for 109 performances, described by *The Times*, 2 September 1909, as 'unpretentious musical comedy, chatter, jingles and tunes'. Ophelia was played by Grace Leigh.
- <sup>37</sup> 'Pump Room Concerts: Visit of Mr. G. von Holst', *Bath Herald*, 19 November 1910, in Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1905–1910 (vol. 3), p. 78.
- <sup>38</sup> *Keene's Bath Journal*, 19 November 1910, in Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1905–1910 (vol. 3), p. 78.

<sup>39</sup> Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1913, (vol. 5), p. 41, programme for Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Institute School of Music concert, 8 March 1913.

<sup>40</sup> Imogen Holst, *The Music of Gustav Holst and Holst's Music Reconsidered* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 14.

<sup>41</sup> The other five songs in this piece were selected from those collected by George Gardiner. They were: 'I Sowed the Seeds of Love', 'There Was a Tree', 'The Song of the Blacksmith', 'I Love my Love', and 'Swansea Town'. With the exception of 'I Love my Love', which came from Cornwall, the songs were from Hampshire.

<sup>42</sup> Gustav Holst, *Letters to W. G. Whittaker*, p. 84 (letter of 6 July 1924). 'PF' is *The Perfect Fool* (Op. 39) (1918–22).

<sup>43</sup> Imogen Holst, *The Music of Gustav Holst*, p. 27.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Vic and Sheila Gammon, 'The Musical Revolution of the Mid-Nineteenth Century: From "Repeat and Twiddle" to "Precision and Snap"', in *The British Brass Band: A Musical and Social History*, ed. by Trevor Herbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 122–54.

<sup>45</sup> Imogen Holst, *Gustav von Holst: A Biography*, p. 132.

<sup>46</sup> Paul Hindmarsh, 'Building a Repertoire', in *The British Brass Band*, pp. 245–77 (p. 254).

<sup>47</sup> Short, p. 272.

<sup>48</sup> London, VWML, Cecil J. Sharp MSS, Press Cuttings Books, January 1933–July 1938, p. 49 (loose item), 'Holst's Emotion', *The Star*, 25 May 1934.

<sup>49</sup> The City of London Wind Ensemble, Geoffrey Brand, *British Wind Music*, CD (Gamut LDR 1001, 1988).

<sup>50</sup> The Western Band of the RAF, director of music Flight Lieutenant D. J. G. Stubbs, *Songs of the West*, CD (Bandleader BNA 5062, 1992).

<sup>51</sup> The Western Band of the RAF recording lasts 9 minutes 30 seconds; the City of London Wind Ensemble recording lasts 11 minutes 32 seconds.

<sup>52</sup> Harmonie De Volksgalm Zichen, Gustav Holst, *Songs of the West*, arr. by Jim Curnow <<http://www.freedrive.com/file/920475>> [accessed 8 February 2010].

<sup>53</sup> John Darling, 'Gustav Holst's *Songs of the West*', *Journal of the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles*, 13 (2006), 61–72.

<sup>54</sup> Imogen Holst, *A Thematic Catalogue of Gustav Holst's Music* (London: Faber and Faber in association with G. and I. Holst, 1974), p. 73.

<sup>55</sup> Imogen Holst, *The Music of Gustav Holst*, p. 14.

<sup>56</sup> Imogen Holst, *Thematic Catalogue*, p. 74.

<sup>57</sup> Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1905–1910 (vol. 3), p. 78, section of programme for Bath Pump Room concerts, 17 November 1910.

<sup>58</sup> George B. Gardiner, *Folk Songs from Hampshire*, with pianoforte accompaniments by Gustav von Holst (London: Novello, 1909). This constituted Book III in the series *Folk Songs of England*, edited by Cecil Sharp, later reissued in one volume as Cecil J. Sharp, *English County Folk Songs* (London: Novello, 1961).

<sup>59</sup> London, VWML, Cecil J. Sharp MSS, Correspondence, Various, Box 2, Gustav Holst to Cecil J. Sharp, 'Jan' [1909].

<sup>60</sup> F[rank] H[owes], 'Obituary: Gustav Holst, September 21st, 1874–May 25th, 1934', *JEFDSS*, 1.3 (1934), 178.

<sup>61</sup> Vaughan Williams, *National Music and Other Essays*, p. 142.

- <sup>62</sup> London, EFDSS Archives, George Gardiner Collection, GG/6/3, George Gardiner to Gustav Holst, [1909].
- <sup>63</sup> Frank Purslow, 'The George Gardiner Folk Song Collection', *FMJ*, 1.3 (1967), 129–57 (pp. 136–37).
- <sup>64</sup> Gardiner Collection, GG/1/9/535.
- <sup>65</sup> Purslow, p. 137.
- <sup>66</sup> John Playford, *The English Dancing Master; or, Plaine and Easie Rules for the Dancing of Country Dances, with the tune to each dance* (London, Thomas Harper for John Playford, 1651), p. 71. Facsimile online at <[http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/playford\\_1651/](http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/playford_1651/)> [accessed 29 January 2010].
- <sup>67</sup> Maud Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 83.
- <sup>68</sup> The event is very fully described in the 164 pages of Sophie C. Lomas, *Souvenir of the Pageant of London* (London: Bemrose and Sons, 1911). For the description of 'The London of Merrie England', see pp. 72–81.
- <sup>69</sup> Lomas, pp. xiii, 11–16.
- <sup>70</sup> Imogen Holst, *Gustav von Holst: A Biography*, p. 40.
- <sup>71</sup> Imogen Holst, *The Music of Gustav Holst*, p. 44.
- <sup>72</sup> Holst to Lucy Broadwood, 23 November 1919.
- <sup>73</sup> Phil Tanner, *The Gower Nightingale*, CD (Veteran VT145CD, 2003), notes by Roy Palmer. The text used by Holst corresponds to Tanner's stanzas 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, with some differences in the words. Edward Lee is recorded by Imogen Holst in her *Thematic Catalogue* (p. 185) as having lived in 'Llangareth' on the Gower; it is probable that Llangenith, where Tanner lived, is the correct location.
- <sup>74</sup> Alan Gibbs, *Holst among Friends* (London: Thames Publishing, 2000), p. 24.
- <sup>75</sup> Imogen Holst, *The Music of Gustav Holst*, p. 138.
- <sup>76</sup> The first version was written before Holst's death, which may go some way to explain this omission.
- <sup>77</sup> Letter of 11 August 1931, quoted in Imogen Holst, *Gustav von Holst: A Biography*, p. 151.
- <sup>78</sup> Sharp Correspondence, Various, Box 2, Gustav Holst to Cecil J. Sharp, 29 June [1923] (the year deduced from his referring to Imogen's age as sixteen).
- <sup>79</sup> Gustav Holst, *Letters to W. G. Whittaker*. The original letters are held with Whittaker's papers in Glasgow University Library, Special Collections Department, which has an excellent website article with facsimiles of a selection of the letters at <<http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/month/sep2004.html>> [accessed 30 January 2010].
- <sup>80</sup> W. G. Whittaker, *North Countrie Ballads, Songs and Pipe Tunes* (London: Curwen, 1921).
- <sup>81</sup> W. G. Whittaker, 'Folk Songs of the North East', in *Collected Essays* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), pp. 1–64.
- <sup>82</sup> Gustav Holst, *Letters to W. G. Whittaker*, p. xi.
- <sup>83</sup> Gustav Holst, *Letters to W. G. Whittaker*, p. 7 (letter of 24 April 1916).
- <sup>84</sup> Gustav Holst, *Letters to W. G. Whittaker*, p. 69 (letter of 2 October 1921).
- <sup>85</sup> Imogen Holst, *Thematic Catalogue*, p. 145.
- <sup>86</sup> Raymond Head, notes to Hilary Davan Wetton and Guildford Choral Society, *Holst: The Morning of the Year, The Golden Goose, King Estmere*, CD (Hyperion CDA 66784, 1996).
- <sup>87</sup> 'King David – Honegger's Symphonic Poem', *The Times*, 18 March 1927, p. 12c.

- <sup>88</sup> 'Royal College of Music – Holst's Choral Ballet' *The Times*, 2 June 1927, p. 14b.
- <sup>89</sup> Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1927 (vol. 14), p. 48; also quoted in 'The Scala Performances', *EFDS News*, 2 (no. 15) (September 1927), 45–46 (p. 46).
- <sup>90</sup> Christopher Bearman, 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice: Mary Neal and Rolf Gardiner', *The Morris Dancer*, 4.1 (2009), 17–29 (p. 23).
- <sup>91</sup> George Butterworth, 'The Songs and Dances in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Savoy Theatre', *The English Folk Dance Society's Journal*, 1.1 (1914), 12–13 (p. 13).
- <sup>92</sup> Head, notes to Hyperion CDA 66784.
- <sup>93</sup> Head, notes to Hyperion CDA 66784.
- <sup>94</sup> 'English Folk Dance Society – Mr. Holst's New Choral Ballet', *The Times*, 20 June 1927, p. 9b.
- <sup>95</sup> 'Holst's Choral Ballet', *Western Morning News*, 20 June 1927, in Holst Birthplace Museum Collection, Gustav Holst Scrapbook, 1927 (vol. 14), p. 53; also quoted in 'The Scala Performances', p. 46.
- <sup>96</sup> Imogen Holst, *Gustav von Holst: A Biography*, p. 122.
- <sup>97</sup> Imogen Holst, *The Music of Gustav Holst*, p. 152.
- <sup>98</sup> S. Baring Gould and H. Fleetwood Sheppard, *Songs and Ballads of the West: A Collection Made from the Mouths of the People*, 4 parts (London: Patey and Willis; Methuen, 1889–91 [as one volume, 1892]); S. Baring Gould and H. Fleetwood Sheppard, *Songs and Ballads of the West: A Collection Made from the Mouths of the People*, [2nd edn] (London: Methuen; Patey and Willis, 1891–95 [as one volume, 1895]); S. Baring-Gould, H. Fleetwood Sheppard, and F. W. Bussell, *Songs of the West: Folk Songs of Devon and Cornwall Collected from the Mouths of the People*, new and rev. [3rd] edn, music editor Cecil J. Sharp (London: Methuen, 1905); S. Baring Gould and H. Fleetwood Sheppard, *A Garland of Country Song: English Folk Songs with their Traditional Melodies* (London: Methuen, 1895).
- <sup>99</sup> Martin Graebe, 'Songs of the West Rediscovered', *ED&S*, 57.2 (1995), 22–23.
- <sup>100</sup> Martin Graebe, 'Devon by Dog Cart and Bicycle: The Folk Song Collaboration of Sabine Baring-Gould and Cecil Sharp, 1904–17', *FMJ*, 9.3 (2008), 292–348 (pp. 299–302).
- <sup>101</sup> *One Hundred English Folk-Songs*, ed. by Cecil J. Sharp (Boston: Oliver Ditson, 1916), p. xii.
- <sup>102</sup> Of the tunes chosen for Holst's revised *Songs of the West*, six out of the seven were Sharp's arrangements, the other ('Hal-an-Tow') being credited to J. Matthews, who had sent it to Baring-Gould. Of the fourteen in Holst's original *Song of the West*, two were tunes assigned to Henry Fleetwood Sheppard, who had died in 1901.
- <sup>103</sup> Playford, p. 55.
- <sup>104</sup> Woking, Surrey History Centre, Broadwood Papers, 2185/LEB/1/296, Baring-Gould to Lucy Broadwood, 10 July 1898.
- <sup>105</sup> Michael Kennedy, talk presented at 'Vaughan Williams in Spring', St Mary de Lode church, Gloucester, 2 May 2008.
- <sup>106</sup> In Tables 1 and 2 the titles and numbers are those given to the songs in Baring-Gould, Fleetwood Sheppard, and Bussell, *Songs of the West* (1905). Where a different title is given in programme notes for Holst's *Songs of the West*, this is also noted (in parentheses). The reference numbers following the source information relate to the Baring-Gould manuscript collection. All of these songs are in the Personal Copy manuscript, denoted by the prefix P, which is followed by the volume and page numbers; the third number (in parentheses) is that assigned to the song by Baring-Gould (see further Graebe, p. 332 n.).

<sup>107</sup> For more on the circumstances of Sharp's visit of 12 August 1904, see Graebe, p. 300 and *passim*.

<sup>108</sup> Baring-Gould, Fleetwood Sheppard, and Bussell, *Songs of the West* (1905), Notes on the Songs, p. 32.

<sup>109</sup> Paul Wilson, personal communication.

<sup>110</sup> Sharp MSS, Press cuttings, 1905–08, p. 63, 'Folk Songs of the West', *M.N.*, 16 August 1907 (it has not been possible to identify which newspaper is indicated by the abbreviation '*M.N.*', which is not used anywhere else among the Cecil Sharp press cuttings).

<sup>111</sup> Arnold Foster, 'Obituary: Gustav Holst, September 21st, 1874 – May 25th, 1834', *EFDS News*, 4.2 (no. 36) (April 1934), 81–82.

<sup>112</sup> W. D. Croft, 'Fifteen Years' Progress', *JEFDS*, 2nd ser., no. 1 (1927), 3–16 (p. 12).

<sup>113</sup> Ashley Hutchings, public interview with Martin Graebe, Cheltenham Folk Festival, 15 February 2009.

<sup>114</sup> The string suite referred to here is Holst's *St Paul's Suite* (Op. 29 No. 2) (1913).