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# The Chamber Music of Frank Bridge

Fabian Gregor Huss

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts, Department of Music, October 2010.

[81,436 words]

## Abstract

The chamber music of Frank Bridge is the most wide-ranging portion of the composer's output, ranging from the student works, written under Stanford at the Royal College of Music, to the most radical examples of the late style. The early works give an insight into some of the fundamental technical and aesthetic priorities of Bridge's musical language, relating to features of his music throughout the rest of his career. These are developed in the subsequent period, as aspects of construction become more advanced and individual. Different aesthetic approaches to chamber and orchestral music suggest distinct influences on and conceptions of different genres. From around 1913 onwards a marked forward-momentum can be felt in Bridge's stylistic development, and the music of the next decade is in some ways traditional, while also reaching full maturity. The post-tonal language follows on naturally from the developments of the transitional period, leading to the exploration of expressionistic elements.

Through detailed technical discussion I trace the evolution of Bridge's musical language in the chamber music, relating it to the remainder of Bridge's output, music by his contemporaries and likely influences, and wider cultural contexts. These include post-Victorian culture, modernism, impressionism, expressionism, attitudes to genre, and concepts of musical expression and their relation to gender identity and morality.

# Acknowledgements

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This thesis is dedicated to Oma, Göti and Johanna.

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: *Felix C. Khan* .....

DATE: *23/3/11* .....

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## Introduction

The chamber music of Frank Bridge has repeatedly been described as the composer's greatest achievement; Anthony Payne, for instance, singles out 'the magnificent Piano Trio no. 2 and the last two quartets' as being 'among the pinnacles of 20th-century English chamber music', and Paul Hindmarsh describes the late chamber works as 'unsurpassed in 20th century British music'.<sup>1</sup> The chamber music was central to Bridge's reputation throughout his career, and a few years after Bridge's death J.A. Westrup reminded his readers that *The Sea* and a handful of successful songs should not distract from the fact that 'chamber music was for Bridge the ideal medium'.<sup>2</sup> Chamber music occupied Bridge throughout his career, from the student works to the most radical compositions of the late period – Payne notes that 'Bridge's chamber music is the one genre which affords a complete view of his extraordinary development'.<sup>3</sup> Bridge's enthusiasm for chamber music is reflected early in his career by his production of four major chamber works under Stanford (substantial orchestral and piano works came after his time at the Royal College of Music) and his enthusiastic participation in chamber ensembles, both during his time at the College and afterwards; he played viola and violin in several prominent string quartets, performing regularly for the first two decades of his career. The earliest indications of his stylistic and technical inclinations can be observed in his student works, and the most radical outgrowths of his late style are to be found in the chamber music masterpieces of the 1920s and 30s. I will consider Bridge's stylistic foundations and development, his technical preferences and their aesthetic implications, particularly in their manifestations in the chamber music; Bridge's attitude to genre will also be explored.

The attention paid to different periods of Bridge's compositional output has been uneven, with almost no discussion of his early music. The surviving student chamber works are discussed in chapter 1, with many musical examples as these pieces remain unpublished. The works produced soon after leaving the RCM have likewise received little attention, with commentators rarely showing an interest in Bridge's output before the First String Quartet (the same is true of his orchestral music, with the *Symphonic*

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Payne, 'Frank Bridge', *Grove Music Online* ([www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)), accessed October 2007; Paul Hindmarsh, 'Frank Bridge – centenary survey', *Music Teacher* 58/8 (August 1979), 13.

<sup>2</sup> J.A. Westrup, 'Frank Bridge' in *British Music of Our Time*, ed. A.L. Bacharach (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1946), 75.

<sup>3</sup> Payne, 'Frank Bridge'.

*Poem* and *Isabella* being largely ignored in discussions of Bridge's music). Of the later output, the prominence of individual chamber works in Bridge scholarship continues to be extremely variable, the convenient grouping of the string quartets leading to a disproportionate amount of attention, for instance in doctoral dissertations by Bryan L. Wade and Angela Edwards, both of which provide some interesting perspectives but fail to create a wider context.<sup>4</sup> The Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet are discussed in Anthony Payne's pioneering study *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, although the modest scale of the book precludes both exhaustive analysis and equal coverage of different works.<sup>5</sup> Peter Pirie's study is similarly uneven, and the author's discussion of Bridge's music is occasionally marred by his provocative rhetoric.<sup>6</sup> The late (post 1920) style has received the greatest share of scholarly attention, notably in doctoral dissertations by Christian Kennett and Robin Granville Harrison, both of which provide useful analytical discussions; Kennett's exploration is focussed entirely on the application of pitch-class set analysis, while Harrison provides a broader '[analysis of] compositional processes and techniques deployed in [the] late works'.<sup>7</sup>

Less analytical studies have also tended to focus largely on the later period, including recent dissertations by Paul Hopwood, Mark Amos, Ciara Burnell, Alison Gillies and Jessica Chan.<sup>8</sup> The most detailed and comprehensive study of Bridge's life is Trevor Bray's *Frank Bridge: A Life in Brief*, published online, while the most important academic groundwork was provided by Paul Hindmarsh's *Frank Bridge: A Thematic Catalogue*, giving information on dates of composition and first performances, locations

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<sup>4</sup> Bryan L. Wade, 'The Four String Quartets of Frank Bridge' (PhD dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1995); Angela Edwards, 'Frank Bridge: The String Quartets' (PhD dissertation, University of Sheffield, 1992).

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Payne, *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative* (London: Thames, 1984); earlier versions of this study appeared as 'The Music of Frank Bridge: 1. The Early Years' (*Tempo* 106, Sept. 1973) and 'The Music of Frank Bridge: 2. The Last Years', (*Tempo* 107, Dec. 1973), and later in *The Music of Frank Bridge* (London: Thames, 1976), eds. Payne, Foreman and Bishop.

<sup>6</sup> Peter J. Pirie, *Frank Bridge* (London: Triad, 1971).

<sup>7</sup> Robin G. Harrison, 'The Late style of Frank Bridge' (PhD dissertation, University of Bangor, Wales, 2003), 'Abstract', p. 1; Christian Kennett, 'The Harmonic Species of Frank Bridge: An Experimental assessment of the Applicability of Pitch-Class Generic Theory to Analysis of a Corpus of Works by a Transitional Composer' (PhD dissertation, University of Reading, 1995). See also Kennett's article 'Segmentation and focus in set-generic analysis', *Music Analysis* 17/2 (July 1998).

<sup>8</sup> Paul Hopwood, 'Frank Bridge and the English Pastoral Tradition' (PhD dissertation, University of Western Australia, 2007); Mark Amos "'A Modernist in the Making'?: Frank Bridge and the Cultural Practice of Music in Britain, 1900-1941' (PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2009); Ciara Burnell, 'Frank Bridge's mature works and issues of British music historiography' (PhD dissertation, Queen's University Belfast, 2009); Alison Gillies, 'Frank Bridge's *Oration*: The Public Statement of a Private Composer' (MPhil dissertation, University of Bristol, 2010); Jessica Chan's 'A critical study of Frank Bridge's *Phantasm* - Rhapsody for pianoforte and orchestra: its reception, manuscript sources and interpretation' (Royal College of Music, 2010) has recently been submitted for examination.

of sketches and manuscripts and much else.<sup>9</sup> Karen Little's *Frank Bridge: A Bio-Bibliography* is similarly a useful source.<sup>10</sup> Numerous shorter commentaries, such as chapters in larger studies, journal articles, CD liner notes and programme notes, as well as discussions of Bridge in various contexts, from the English Musical Renaissance to impressionism, are referred to throughout this study and are listed in the bibliography.

There is a significant amount of correspondence, primarily the letters to Marjorie Fass and Benjamin Britten (both collections are housed in the Britten-Pears library in Aldeburgh), and those to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge (housed in the Library of Congress, Washington DC); smaller collections include letters to Edward Speyer (held in the Royal College of Music) and the BBC. While Bridge's often flippant humour, puns and doodles make for entertaining reading, only occasional insights into his musical tastes and compositional methods are offered. The manuscripts and sketches most immediately relevant to this study are held in the Frank Bridge Collection at the RCM (principally the student works and the original version of the Piano Quintet).<sup>11</sup>

The considerable expansion of Bridge's musical language from around 1913 onwards presents a challenge to the analytical exploration of his music, as the tonal and post-tonal portions of his output necessitate fundamentally different approaches. It is my aim, however, to trace the continuities in Bridge's development, without being hindered by the discontinuity arising from the application of contrasting models of analysis (Wade's strict application of Schenkerian analysis to the first two string quartets and pitch-class set analysis to the later quartets is an example of such an approach and the difficulties it presents in relating the earlier and later styles). In tracing the continuities between compositional periods I intend to follow Bridge's own suggestion (made in relation to the difficulty of coming to terms with modern idioms) that 'a composer's early work possibly has stepping stones upon which an understanding may grow.'<sup>12</sup>

Bridge's position in British music has not yet been dealt with satisfactorily, and while this is not the place for an exhaustive exploration, a few preliminary comments may be appropriate. A number of factors have contributed to the difficulties in forming a more exact understanding of how Bridge fits in to his national-historical context,

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<sup>9</sup> Trevor Bray, *Frank Bridge: A Life in Brief*, <http://www.trevor-bray-music-research.co.uk>, accessed September 2007; Paul Hindmarsh, *Frank Bridge: A Thematic Catalogue* (London: Faber, 1983).

<sup>10</sup> Karen R. Little, *Frank Bridge: A Bio-Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> The manuscript scores of the B flat String Quartet and C minor Piano Quartet are held in private collections; the Frank Bridge Collection includes copies of these scores.

<sup>12</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 8 December 1939.



including the wide range of stylistic development just mentioned; that his earlier style has become associated with the label 'salon music' has not been helpful, and his identity as 'Britten's teacher' has complicated the reception of his music, particularly the later works. The enrichment of Bridge's musical language from modernist Continental quarters (coupled with a rejection of the typically 'English' folk-song and Tudor influences) and the broad stylistic range of his output have prevented convenient contextual and technical classifications on which to base explorations of the man and his music. It is my aim to contribute primarily to the technical understanding of Bridge's music, dealing with some of the immediately contingent contexts as they arise. My technical discussion of compositional processes will thus be augmented and contextualised by a consideration of stylistic and aesthetic points of reference, such as impressionism, expressionism, tropes such as 'pastoral', 'tragic', 'idyllic' and similar types of characterisation, as well as their technical and aesthetic implications and the socio-musical value judgements (such as implications of gender or morality) they might entail.

I will divide my discussion into chapters dealing with specific stylistic periods, beginning with the works completed at the RCM. Chapters on the works written after his student days until 1912 follow. From 1913 onwards, a distinct forward-momentum in Bridge's stylistic development can be observed, in the chamber, orchestral and piano music. The next decade is in some ways transitional, as a number of increasingly modern influences encouraged Bridge to broaden his musical horizons. The two major chamber works of this period will be discussed in the fifth chapter. The remaining two chapters discuss Bridge's post-tonal chamber works, which fall naturally into two separate periods. My discussion throughout will be confined to Bridge's more substantial chamber works, as the shorter pieces tend to stand essentially outside the evolution of style and technique that I wish to trace.

\* \* \*

### Theoretical Models

Much of the discussion will be of an analytical nature, but all technical examination should aim to illustrate the development of Bridge's musical language; in contrast to

Kennett's 'journey into theory', analysis will not be presented as an end in itself, nor is this study intended as an investigation of the applicability of theoretical/analytical models to Bridge's output.<sup>13</sup> A useful point of reference in this regard is Joseph Kerman's study of Beethoven's string quartets, where connections between and development across individual works are traced through technical discussion, i.e. details are related to a wider perspective.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Kerman's recognition of the subjective element of analysis is significant – what Boulez calls the 'interpretation of structure', which is achieved by 'finding a plan, a law of internal organization which takes account of [the musical] facts with the maximum coherence'.<sup>15</sup> This search for and interpretation of structure (in its widest sense) cannot be objective: already the choice of method and focus of the analysis largely defines the eventual outcome. It is with this in mind that I avoid the rigorous application of pre-existing models – the minute analyses that these would produce are furthermore unnecessary to the general aim of my discussion. Put simply, this is to develop a deeper understanding of Bridge's approach to composition, his music, and its wider contexts, including its relation to previous and contemporary music, as well as social, intellectual and ideological trends.

Another significant issue, also carefully handled by Kerman, is the combination and integration of musical and biographical discussion. This will be of particular importance in discussing Bridge's stylistic development, a process often related to events external to the music without a thorough discussion of technical elements. However, as J. Peter Burkholder points out, 'music is simultaneously an historic and a technical subject', and 'music theory is better when it is historically conscious, and ... music history is better when it is theoretically informed'.<sup>16</sup> In balancing these elements, I would like to aim for the 'middle line' debated in such entertaining fashion by the characters 'staid music theorist' and 'slick new musicologist' in Matthew Brown's '“Adrift on Neurath's Boat”: The Case for a Naturalized Music Theory'.<sup>17</sup> Brown concludes that music may be studied as an object in itself through theoretical apparatus, as long as it is understood that the resultant analysis is evidence rather than truth.

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<sup>13</sup> Kennet, 'The Harmonic Species of Frank Bridge', 8.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Kerman, *The Beethoven Quartets* (Oxford: OUP, 1966).

<sup>15</sup> Pierre Boulez, *Boulez on Music Today* (London: Faber, 1975), 18.

<sup>16</sup> J. Peter Burkholder, 'Music Theory and Musicology', *The Journal of Musicology* 11/1 (Winter, 1993), 12-13. There are significant parallels here with Kerman's approach in *Musicology* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1985).

<sup>17</sup> Matthew Brown, '“Adrift on Neurath's Boat”: The Case for a Naturalized Music Theory', *The Journal of Musicology* 15/3 (Summer 1997).

The extent of Bridge's stylistic development poses the fundamental challenge that applies to all attempts at an integrated technical discussion of music from more than one stylistic period. An examination of the role of tonal architecture in Bridge's earlier works calls for a different analytical approach to the study of alternative strategies of achieving coherence in his later music. The essential focus of the discussion will be the examination of similarities and contrasts between musical characteristics and procedures from different stylistic periods. The identification of common features and similarities, and their evolution throughout Bridge's output, the introduction of new techniques, their antecedents and functions, as well as the manner in which these relate, will be central to my discussion. Thus elements such as Bridge's formal procedures, his manipulation of material and his varying use of harmony or (in the later music) quasi-harmonic material must be brought into relation, allowing them to be understood (or 'interpreted' in Boulez's sense) as aspects of a wider context. This will, in turn, make fruitful comparison between stylistically disparate works possible, through a flexible type of hermeneutic analysis of structural function. An understanding of Bridge's concept of 'musical logic', as articulated by his music, and its manifestations in technical and aesthetic elements, will be crucial to the elucidation of this wider context. While certain aspects of and concepts borrowed from the theoretical approaches of Schenker, Schoenberg and Forte will be of some use in this discussion, their systematic application would be impractical and at odds with the aims of my discussion, as their relevance would be restricted largely to discreet segments of Bridge's output or specific aspects of the music. Factors such as Bridge's various reinterpretations of traditional sonata form in his arch forms, the implications of his methods of thematic manipulation and transformation, and his strategies of structural coherence in the post-tonal works call for an inclusive approach in which different types of organisation are considered concurrently. Musical forms will thus be approached in terms of their definition by Roger Scruton as 'traditions' rather than 'a priori structures, imposed by convention', and Bridge's engagement with and manipulation of these traditions will be explored with a view to illustrating the development of his musical personality while creating a relevant context for such a discussion.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 340.

## 1 – Background and RCM, 1900-1902

Frank Bridge was born on 26 February 1879 in Brighton, the tenth of twelve children of William Henry Bridge, a violin teacher and director of a music-hall orchestra. He received his first violin lessons from his father, later attending Brighton Music School and playing in his father's orchestra, for which he arranged music, and which he conducted in his father's absence. He also played chamber music with members of his family. A distinctly Victorian mindset is evident in William Bridge's disciplinarian approach to music tuition, making his son practise long hours, which caused the boy's back to develop a hump. Learning and making music were presented to Bridge as immensely serious matters, and although he could later compose and perform music reflecting his wit and jovial sense of humour, in some ways he never rebelled against his father's somewhat austere concept of music-making. Bridge's often-praised professionalism and perfectionism in all his musical activities is a direct outgrowth of this upbringing, and the resultant meticulous attitude to composition was to influence Bridge's style in various ways over the course of his career. A by-product of this mindset was a somewhat self-conscious engagement with his identity as a professional musician; he worked hard in the early stages of his career to establish a reputation as an outstanding violist, but subsequently his enthusiasm waned noticeably. His attempt to establish the more 'respectable' identities of conductor and composer was pursued earnestly, revealing a socio-musical aspiration that may have influenced the increasingly serious and uncompromising tone of the later works.<sup>1</sup> In Bridge's professionalism and awareness of his social standing we might also identify an underlying sense of insecurity that makes itself felt in his quarrel with his brother William (whom Bridge criticised for not taking his cello studies seriously enough, causing a lasting rift), reports of his somewhat prickly demeanour as a conductor, and his acerbic correspondence with Ireland and Vaughan Williams over Britten's education at the RCM.<sup>2</sup> As with Brahms, the assertion of a personal artistic vision was conditional upon the legitimation and security provided by technical perfection.

If he later tired of life as a performer, during his time at the RCM and for over a decade afterwards Bridge played a vast quantity of chamber music, at College chamber

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<sup>1</sup> See Amos, 'A Modernist in the Making', for a thorough discussion of this matter.

<sup>2</sup> See Bray, *Frank Bridge – A Life in Brief* for discussion of these points.

concerts and (increasingly) as a member of several prominent string quartets. Bridge entered the Royal College of Music as a violin student in 1896, winning a foundation scholarship three years later to study composition with Stanford (until 1903). His particular interest in chamber music is reflected in his student compositions – the four substantial works completed under Stanford are a Piano Trio, String Quartet, String Quintet and Piano Quartet (all of which Bridge later suppressed) – and his increasing participation in performances of chamber music. Bridge's first recorded appearance in a chamber ensemble is as violinist in the premiere of his Piano Trio in D minor in November 1900. His first appearance as a violist followed shortly, and it was with this instrument that Bridge was to establish an outstanding reputation, particularly as a member of the English String Quartet. After 1900 Bridge's appearances at college chamber concerts rapidly increased, and he featured regularly until 1910, often participating in several works in a programme (see Appendix). He also played in the college orchestra conducted by Stanford, with the second violins (which he led) and the violas at different times. Brahms, Beethoven, Schumann and (increasingly) Dvořák featured most often on concert programmes, with Mozart and Schubert also appearing regularly. Much of the repertoire was still relatively contemporary: Tchaikovsky and Franck were only recently deceased, and Brahms and Chausson had died during Bridge's early years at the College. Grieg, Bruch and Saint-Saëns were still alive, and Fauré and Glazunov were at the height of their powers. Debussy's music was gradually becoming known, and he had yet to compose much of his greatest music, while Ravel and Rachmaninov were only beginning to approach maturity.

The prominence of Brahms necessarily made itself felt as an influence on Bridge's and surrounding generations of composers, although in Bridge's case a certain incompatibility of technique (particularly in the development of themes) makes this a difficult influence to evaluate. Many a similar turn of phrase to Dvořák and Glazunov can be observed, and Franck was also a significant influence.<sup>3</sup> The influence of Grieg,

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<sup>3</sup> Both Glazunov's orchestral and chamber works were performed regularly; stylistic similarities are most evident in his less obviously 'Slavic' works, such as the String Quintet op. 39. During this period Glazunov was seen as the successor to Tchaikovsky's position as the pre-eminent Russian composer, his music being 'more acceptable to a foreign audience than the productions of the extreme nationalist school, of which Rimsky-Korsakov is the chief representative.' (*The Times*, 26 Sept 1896, p. 7, quoted in Gareth J. Thomas, 'The Impact of Russian Music in England 1893-1929', PhD dissertation, University of Birmingham, 2005). Contemporary criticism often disapproved of the nationalistic element, feeling it to be detrimental to valued characteristics such as 'sober restraint and logic of form', although later the composer's 'Western' sensibilities were criticised (Thomas, 'The Impact of Russian Music in England 1893-1929', p. 22).

particularly the G minor String Quartet, can be supposed in certain elements of the early music as well as a few later works; a number of harmonic features, such as abrupt movement between remote key areas and the use of dominant chords with added degrees, bear a particular resemblance (the third *Idyll* being an obvious example). More modern influences appear later in Bridge's music, at different times and to varying degrees. Influences such as Strauss and the New German School composers can occasionally be detected, while Debussy was a growing influence from Bridge's discovery of his String Quartet onwards (in 1904). The Preludes and other piano works appear to have been a significant influence later on. Scriabin's music is another likely influence in the transitional period, although it is manifested in details of harmony and gesture rather than on a more profound level, and similarities with Debussy's language make it difficult to evaluate Scriabin's influence specifically. It becomes increasingly difficult to disentangle possible later influences such as Bartok and the Second Viennese School.

Bridge's student works provide an insight into the foundations of his style – his musical preoccupations, technical preferences (and problems) and first steps towards individuality of style. A number of fundamental (post-)Victorian attitudes can be observed at this point, some of which become, if anything, more prominent in later years – for instance what Edward Green identifies as the opposition between 'the desire for intensity of experience ... and ... the concurrent and equally powerful desire for restraint and proportion.'<sup>4</sup> This results in Bridge's music in the juxtaposition of emphatically expressed yet refined and hence abstracted opposing characters, articulated in (indeed, strengthening) the 'logical' and dialectical forms of German romanticism and variants based on these. As Green notes, this dialecticism is central to the Victorian understanding of beauty. There are many lasting traces of the influence of German romanticism in Bridge's music, for instance concepts of genre and musical logic, although these can be complicated by influences from more modern music, particularly French (see, for instance, my discussion of 'masculine' and 'feminine' aspects of Bridge's music in chapter 5).

The German-French intellectual foundations of Bridge's music are further reflected in his post-tonal music, at times approaching the monadic nature of Schoenberg, but

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<sup>4</sup> Edward Green, 'Music and the Victorian Mind: The Musical Aesthetics of the Rev. H.R. Haweis', *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 39/2 (December 2008), 243.

tempered by the traces of Debussy and Scriabin.<sup>5</sup> Remnants and complex manipulations of a neo-romantic approach to musical logic and structure also come into play. In the late chamber music the 'unrestricted autonomy released by the progressive social isolation of art' can be felt with all the implications of intellectual elitism this might entail.<sup>6</sup> The abstract, technical preoccupations of the student works reveal the origins of Bridge's lasting technical and aesthetic approach to chamber music, presenting early versions of the characteristics and identities that he would manipulate masterfully in his late works.

In formulating a personal style Bridge developed many idiosyncratic harmonic and formal procedures of considerable significance for his later output, often arising out of the dual dilemmas implicit in this musical heritage: of dealing with the ongoing problems posed by a romantic tonal language (particularly those arising in minor-key sonata movements) as well as assimilating the influence of more modern idioms. These issues are of continued relevance in Bridge's music, increasing in significance as they are brought to bear on a more advanced, personal idiom; thus Bridge's later stylistic expansion contains a critique of aspects of his earlier style and aesthetic, most obviously in the manipulation of fundamental technical procedures based on the concepts of balance and beauty described above.

While the influence of the Beethoven-Brahms tradition is obvious, Bridge's engagement with the technical features implied by this outlook raises some problems in the early music, and further influences such as Grieg, Franck and Fauré perhaps complicate the matter. In particular, Bridge's lyrical themes do not always lend themselves to motivic development, and the apparent obligation to write substantial development sections can be detrimental to the success of the sonata movements. Bridge was to learn to manipulate the motivic components of his themes and recognise the advantages of succinct development sections later in his career, but in his student works they can cause problems, particularly when combined with attempts to establish a more personal musical language. In my discussion of Bridge's chamber music I will endeavour to highlight the continuity of his musical development while examining new features as they arise. The student works are a fertile area for exploration, revealing fundamental elements of Bridge's approach to composition. For this reason, the student

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<sup>5</sup> See David Roberts, *Art and Enlightenment – Aesthetic Theory after Adorno* (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 1991) for a thorough discussion of the monadic musical work.

<sup>6</sup> Roberts, *Art and Enlightenment*, 34. Mark Amos explores the possible implications of intellectualism in the late chamber music in 'A Modernist in the Making?'

works will be considered in some detail, with extensive discussion of technical features, providing a basis for comparison with features of later works. No single approach to analysis will be favoured, with motivic, harmonic and other structural elements being brought into relation and individual details highlighted where appropriate.

The B flat String Quartet is the earliest surviving work by Bridge; it is predated by a Piano Trio in D minor which is now lost. A significant unusual feature is the work's major key – it is one of only two completed substantial chamber works in major keys (the other is the String Sextet), a fact curiously highlighted by its unusual tonic minor introduction. The remaining chamber works of Bridge's formative period favour minor keys, perhaps betraying a romantic, *Sturm und Drang* sensibility evident throughout much of the remainder of Bridge's chamber output. This would seem to be in keeping with Bridge's tendency to oppose dramatic/tragic first subject material with lyrical/idyllic second subjects, an easily-established and obvious contrast conducive to the creation of tension. As I will discuss later, the inherent volatility of the minor key was to become an important stimulant in Bridge's search for an individual style, both in his development of an advanced tonal language and in his exploration of novel structures.

As students of Stanford, Bridge and his contemporaries at the RCM were instilled with a strong sense of the importance of complete technical control and logical construction, an approach in accordance with the sense of professionalism instilled in Bridge by his father.<sup>7</sup> Stylistic development was initially less important, although this later developed hand in hand with his technical apparatus. In his treatise *Musical Composition*, Stanford writes: 'All the music which has survived the ravages of time has been inherently logical, it states its premisses [*sic*] and evolves its conclusions.'<sup>8</sup> Originality was a secondary concern, and great emphasis was placed on learning from the music of the masters:

The laws of evolution apply as rigidly to musical art as they do to nature itself. It is not necessary to go out of the way to seek for novelty of design any more than for novelty

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<sup>7</sup> Pace Howells's assertion that Stanford found Bridge unteachable ('[Stanford] said [Bridge] was a magnificent musician, but the enigma of Frank Bridge's personality stifled Stanford's efforts to help him'); the discipline Bridge brought to his work as a student certainly had a lasting effect, and was by no means uninfluenced by his teacher. Christopher Palmer, *Herbert Howells – A Celebration*, second edition (London: Thames, 1996), 372.

<sup>8</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Musical Composition – A Short Treatise for Students* (London: Macmillan, 1922), 4-5.



of expression. No two faces are exactly alike, although the ears, eyes, nose and mouth are in the same relative position. To paint a face with two noses or four ears would not suggest novelty of form, but only the imbecility of the artist.

...

The history of musical form, then, is a history of evolution, and in order to master it, the student must evolve it for himself in miniature on the same lines that it has been evolved through the last three centuries...<sup>9</sup>

Too many students are afraid, from a natural desire to be original, to copy the examples which the great composers provide; but if they wish to get at the root of the methods in which their predecessors successfully worked, they must make up their minds to do so.<sup>10</sup>

Mozart was a favourite model, particularly for string quartet writing, and it is likely that Stanford would have recommended his quartets to Bridge as models for composition.<sup>11</sup> Although a specifically Mozartian influence is difficult to identify in Bridge's music, a number of more generally Classical traits can be identified, for instance the condensation of first subject material in recapitulation sections, and indeed the use of sonata-arch.<sup>12</sup> Bridge's preference for melodically-conceived principal material, rather than the progressive development of motivic units, in his student works, perhaps betrays a sympathy with Classical models rather than the Beethoven-Brahms tradition. Similarities with Brahms grow more pronounced as Bridge's technique develops, for instance in a greater sense of motivic unity and more coherently structured development sections. The influence of Beethoven is similarly difficult to evaluate (and Bridge's correspondence reveals that he admired Beethoven's music very much), although there are occasional similarities of texture, for instance in some contrapuntal and imitative passages, and treble passages such as that which opens the development of the E minor String Quintet's first movement.

Although Stanford's teachings appear to have given Bridge a secure technical grounding, he was later somewhat ambivalent about his teacher and the RCM more

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<sup>9</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, 76.

<sup>10</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, 78.

<sup>11</sup> James Friskin noted Stanford's approval of Mozart as a model; see Harry Plunket Greene's *Charles Villiers Stanford* (London: Arnold, 1935), 98.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Rosen notes both of these as distinctly Classical procedures, the former being recommended by H.C. Koch in his *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition* (Leipzig, 1793) and the latter being exemplified by, for instance, the finale of Haydn's Symphony No. 44 in E minor and Mozart's Piano Sonata in D major, K. 311, Violin Sonata in D major, K. 306, and Symphony in C major, K. 388. Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, revised edition (New York: Norton, 1988), 286.

generally, describing it bitterly as ‘the Institution, at which [I] imbibed water thro’ a straw instead of glaxo and bovril’.<sup>13</sup> He certainly approached his studies (and student life) with great enthusiasm, and seems to have enjoyed his time as a student, even if he was later critical of the education he received; it seems natural that Stanford’s outlook would have seemed narrow by 1919.

There are a number of interesting parallels (and contrasts) with the music of his contemporaries and immediate predecessors at the RCM. Most illustrious of the latter was William Hurlstone, who had finished his studies in 1898 (the same year as Thomas Dunhill and Gustav Holst; Vaughan Williams had completed his studies the previous year). John Ireland left in 1901, while George Dyson was an almost exact contemporary at the RCM. James Friskin, although he studied with Stanford after Bridge had finished his own studies (from 1905-1908), was also closely associated with Bridge, who played the viola part in early performances of Friskin’s Piano Quartet (1905) and Piano Quintet (1908), and they stayed in contact after Friskin emigrated to the USA in 1914.

Of the fellow-students mentioned above, Bridge has most in common with Hurlstone. There are a number of (mainly superficial) similarities with Ireland’s surviving student chamber works, two string quartets from 1897 (written just before and after Ireland became a student of Stanford) and a Sextet for Horn, Clarinet and String Quartet, written the following year; the Second Quartet and Sextet are, however, much more self-consciously Brahmsian than Bridge’s music. Hurlstone’s student works offer a more illuminating comparison and may have been a direct influence; both composers’ penchant for fortissimo unison openings (usually statements of primary material) is a particularly obvious parallel. There are, however, also a number of illuminating differences – Hurlstone’s often four-square rhythms contrast strongly with Bridge’s rhythmic flexibility, and Bridge does not attempt the type of developing variation found in many Hurlstone recapitulations, for instance in the 1898 E minor String Quartet. While the outer movements of their works thus differ sharply in terms of technique, both composers created highly polished inner movements characterised by simple structures and remarkable thematic economy. A contrast of technique recurs, however, in the means by which this economy is achieved – while Hurlstone tends towards continuous variation allied with harmonic variety, Bridge prefers multiple counterstatements with varied continuations or changes in harmony, dynamics or

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<sup>13</sup> Letter to Marjorie Fass, 18 June 1919.

texture. Perhaps a more general similarity is an evident agreement on the nature of musical logic. Although enriched by French influences, the basic premises of this concept of 'good music' are in many ways apparent throughout Bridge's output, and are clearly retained in his post-tonal idiom. While there are some similarities here with the Second Viennese School, Bridge's development is parallel to that of Schoenberg and Berg, rather than a response; Debussy and Scriabin are the more significant influences, leading to fundamental differences in musical language.

Bridge's approach to form is in keeping with that of his peers, evincing a conservative late romantic view of, for instance, 'standardised' sonata form. As noted by Scott Burnham, '[around the mid 19th century] sonata form begins to be treated somewhat more abstractly and schematically [than previously]; less stress is placed on the great variety of ways the form could be realized. The view is no longer from ground level but from a generalizing distance.'<sup>14</sup> In some respects this approach does not change throughout Bridge's tonal chamber music, although some aspects of harmonic structure (particularly at foreground and middleground levels) and the implications of types of symmetrical construction become increasingly personal.

\* \* \*

### String Quartet in B flat

(i) *Adagio – Allegro moderato*

(ii) *Allegro*

(iii) *Andante*

(iv) *Presto*

There is a Haydnesque quality to the opening of the B flat String Quartet, in its tonic minor introduction, gentle counterpoint and the asymmetrical phrase structures of the introduction and first subject; Parry's *Cambridge Symphony* may have been a more recent inspiration, with some similarities in the character and construction of themes. Both the introspection of the introduction and the lively freshness of much of the first

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<sup>14</sup> Scott Burnham, 'Form', *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory* (ed. Thomas Christensen, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2002), 891.

subject and transition are calculated to provide maximum contrast to the languid lyricism of the second subject. As noted, this is Bridge's only early chamber work in a major key, and the possibilities for characterisation explored here (particularly in the first subject) are clearly differentiated from the melancholy or tragic/dramatic types found in much of the remaining chamber music. While Bridge may have found such a balance more conducive to the development of his musical language, the B flat Quartet nevertheless demonstrates that he was entirely capable of constructing and handling attractive principal material in a major key. The mood of later works may thus be attributed to an aesthetic and technical choice, and what Stephen Banfield calls the '[natural] melancholy' of 'Bridge's creative nature'.<sup>15</sup>

Introductory material is presented in imitative entries and restated in various consecutive versions (Ex. 1-1); indeed, the entire thematic material of the introduction derives from motif *a*. After 13 bars of varying harmonic and textural treatment, the motif provides the opening of the first subject, in B flat major (Ex. 1-2). Many features of the exposition are characteristic, including the disparate treatment of antecedent and consequent phrases, the latter being followed directly by an extended continuation (using derivatives of *a* and preparing for the next phrase, Ex. 1-3), building gradually to an emphatic, homophonic phrase (Ex. 1-4). While multiple repetitions and reinterpretations of themes, usually including forceful statements of primary material, are recurring features of his music, Bridge also occasionally introduces phrases such as this, almost always homophonic in texture, which are only loosely related to the

Adagio

Ex. 1-1: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 1 - 3  
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<sup>15</sup> Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility and English Songs: Critical Studies of the Early 20th Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 70.

**Allegro moderato**

Ex. 1-2: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 14 - 20

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Ex. 1-3: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 24 - 25

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principal thematic material; in some later works such gestures are used to open transition sections. The resulting ternary arrangement of first subject material (see Fig. 1-1) is particularly characteristic, and in later works it often facilitates a climactic return of principal material to conclude the first subject area. Incidentally, the manner in which



Ex. 1-4: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 30 - 31

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	(14)	(38)	(56)	(87)
Introduction	First subject	Transition	Second subject	Closing
Principal motif	a) antecedent using principal motif b) extended consequent plus climactic phrase (derived from cons.) c) antecedent linking to transition	(enters instead of S1 consequent)	parallel period + counterstatements  link to closing	
Bb minor	Bb major	D minor – C (dominant of F)	F major	F major

Fig. 1-1: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, plan of exposition

the return of the principal material links to the transition is similar to the corresponding part of Hurlstone's E minor String Quartet.

Throughout the introduction and first subject exposition, and indeed later in the movement, material deriving from *a* is given thematic precedence – the consequent phrase, after its initial statement and continuation, is not recalled. It is restated in the recapitulation (with a truncated continuation), while the climactic phrase given in Ex. 1-4 features in the development, but not the recapitulation. This sense of concentration on the essential aspects of principal material in recapitulation sections is a recurring feature of Bridge's sonata structures. Indeed, recapitulations often feature truncated or even amalgamated versions of first subject and transition sections; this shifts attention towards the second subject, which tends to be recapitulated in full, and makes room for the final return of principal material that can be found at the end of almost all of Bridge's sonata movements. The result is a sense of clarification or crystallisation, as

only the essential elements of the initial contrast/conflict are recalled by way of resolution, with a final reference to the opening material rounding off both the recapitulation and the movement in a manner prophetic of the arch forms that were soon to preoccupy Bridge. The dynamics created between expansive (in some ways diffuse) first subject expositions and their concentration in recapitulation sections become particularly significant in the post-tonal works.

The transition, which follows on from imitative entries of primary material (Ex. 1-5), is typical for early Bridge in its use of sequential passages and the conspicuously thematic nature of its material, although the variety of material used is unusual even for Bridge. Sequence is an important element of his technique, and it is used in the late romantic, Wagnerian manner, as a means of avoiding 'trivial' and 'conventional' phrase structures, rather than in the more strictly developmental context found in Classical music; in Bridge, as in Wagner, sequences often move towards 'tonally more remote

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The first system consists of four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass) in B-flat major. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system continues the piece, featuring more complex rhythmic patterns and dynamics, including *cresc.*, *f*, and *dim.* markings. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks.

Ex. 1-5: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 34 - 39

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Ex. 1-6a: String Quartet in B flat,  
first movement, bar 46

Ex. 1-6b: String Quartet in B flat,  
first movement, bars 50 - 51

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regions', but are often contained or balanced by conventional phrase relationships.<sup>16</sup> The triplets shown in Ex. 1-5 eventually lead to a *fortissimo* triplet passage (Ex. 1-6a), followed by another motif, also *fortissimo* (Ex. 1-6b). Interestingly, it is only this latter passage that is recalled in the recapitulation, due surely to its emphatic character (which contrasts strongly with the second subject) and simply the fact that it is placed last, allowing for an exact reflection of the original approach to the second subject.

A short solo viola passage leads to the second subject, in F major (Ex. 1-7). The single-minded insistence with which Bridge repeatedly restates the theme in various guises, passed between instruments, with different continuations and varying harmonic and textural accompaniment, is typical of his second subjects and has far-reaching consequences for the manner in which he constructs movements. Since Bridge's

Ex. 1-7: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 56 - 59

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<sup>16</sup> Dahlhaus, *Between Romanticism and Modernism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), 45.



treatment of material in such passages tends not to be developmental, textural, timbral and dynamic variation must be combined with appropriate harmonic invention in order to maintain interest. As we will see, such exhaustive thematic treatment can cause problems in Bridge's development sections in the early works.

The languid, lyrical tone of the second subject makes for Bridge's most conventionally characterised masculine/feminine opposition between subject areas. The first subject is fresh, manly and healthy, characterised by strong rhythmic drive, a full texture and clearly separated sub-phrases, making for an effective contrast with the lyrical, feminine ('drooping') second. The latter characterisation is a constant in Bridge's music, with second subjects often acting as an idyllic escape from the gloomy or violent first subject material, whose 'masculine'/'healthy' identity is often ambiguous (see pp. 144-6 for a discussion of these concepts). The static nature of thematic treatment in the second subject (i.e. effectively a series of counterstatements) is also typical, suggesting an object somehow removed from the progress of the rest of the movement, an essential element of the idyll represented. It is as if the second subject is intended to appear 'outside time', which is represented by the varied and developing material that surrounds it – this further emphasises the extreme contrast of characterisation found here and elsewhere. In the minor-key works, such distinctions become even more significant.

A final *fortissimo* statement of the second subject theme leads to a relatively brief independent closing section (Ex. 1-8). Bridge regularly makes use of such passages in his early sonata movements, with varying degrees of success. Here the leisurely, sustained material is an effective link to the development, where first subject material is reintroduced, initially in crotchets, before momentum is regained (Ex. 1-9). The development is somewhat fragmented, with a wide range of material being presented in a rather aimless progression: imitative treatment of the second subject (second violin and cello, Ex. 1-10), new material derived from the first subject (Ex. 1-11), a triplet figure (Ex. 1-12, cf. Ex. 1-10) and a series of derivations of the 'climactic' phrase from the first subject (Ex. 1-13) leading to the principal first subject theme itself; a brief reference to the transitional theme given in Ex. 1-6b is also made. On the second appearance of the 'climactic' phrase, an inventive harmonic progression (A major – C major – D major – F minor – A flat major – F minor) prepares for the intermittent dominant pedal that eventually leads to the recapitulation.

The diminished fifths formed between constituent notes of the first four chords, and the same interval outlined by the last four, are surely not a coincidence, linking with the many motifs outlining that interval throughout the movement (particularly those deriving from *a*, cf. Exx. 1-1, 1-2, 1-3 [third beat], 1-5, 1-6b, 1-9, 1-10 [first violin], 1-12, and perhaps also the whole-tone content of 1-13). Indeed, they are thrown into relief by the work's otherwise smooth harmonic progress, with functional and sequential

Ex. 1-8: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 87 - 93

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Ex. 1-9: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 100 - 104

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Ex. 1-10: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 120 - 122

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Ex. 1-11: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, first violin, bar 129

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Ex. 1-12: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, second violin, bar 139

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Ex. 1-13: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 143 - 144

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progressions navigating the traditional tonal centres of the exposition and the higher levels of tension required in the development. Abrupt progressions tend to involve leaps

of a third or diminished fifth. Third relationships are not generally Schubertian in character, however, and counterstatements featuring leaps of a third or major/minor alterations are not usual in Bridge's music. As we will see, the diminished fifth is further explored melodically and harmonically in subsequent movements.

The development section as a whole is somewhat disjointed and aimless, with little sense of purposeful harmonic movement or thematic development; perhaps Bridge felt compelled to attempt a substantial development rather than opting for a simpler and more concise outline:

(100)	(120)	(129)	(143)	(156)
Reintroduction of first subject material, building in intensity	Derivations of second subject material	Semi-quaver motif derived from first subject, followed by derivations of transition material	Derivation of climactic (S1) phrase, followed by introduction of transition and principal first subject motifs	Imitative entries recalling introduction
F major	D major – B minor	B minor	E $\flat$ /A $\flat$ major – F minor	Intermittent dominant (F) pedal

Fig. 1-2: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, plan of development

Introductory material prepares for the recapitulation, with the first subject proceeding as before, but in a severely truncated form. The continuation of the consequent phrase is shortened and leads directly to a four bar transition, making use, as noted, of only the concluding material from the original transition (Ex. 1-14). While first subject recapitulations tend to be condensed, often facilitating a return of opening material at

Ex. 1-14: String Quartet in B flat, first movement, bars 179 - 182

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the end of a movement, second subject recapitulations tend to be more extensive (as is the case here), often mirroring the original form or principal material, perhaps with some minor rearrangement or rescoring. The closing section is here followed by a reprise of introductory material, bringing the movement to a close.

Many of the features discussed above were to become enduring elements of Bridge's later chamber music. The constitution of and relationships between introductory, first subject, transitional and second subject areas are characteristic, particularly of the early period. Also characteristic of the early music is the rambling development section, in which Bridge fails to advance significantly on the techniques of thematic manipulation already drawn upon in the exposition. A sense of genuine development, a meaningful exploration of the possibilities and implications of the material, is lacking, a problem that is re-encountered in Bridge's other early sonata movements. In fact, this is perhaps the most successful example in Bridge's early music. A comparison of the structure of the development section (Fig. 1-2, above) with that of the Second String Quartet (Fig. 1-3, which resembles the simplicity of Brahms's developments, for instance in his First Cello Sonata in E minor, Fig. 1-4) illustrates the fragmentary and aimless nature of the early development sections.

[8]	[11]	[12]
Combination and progressive development of first and second subject motifs, building in intensity.	B minor statement of (principally) second subject material; high dynamic level, contrapuntal melodic parts and active texture.	Short, climactic appearance of transition material, followed by abrupt harmonic diversion to <i>poco a poco tranquillo</i> link to recapitulation.
[Bb major] – F# (dominant of B minor)	B minor (relatively stable, linking with keys of subsequent movements)	B minor – F pedal, interrupted by introduction of melodic cello part and oblique harmonic approach to tonic G minor.

Fig. 1-3: Second String Quartet, first movement, plan of development

(95)	(126)	(145)
Development of various first subject motifs in succession.	Second subject motifs.	Closing material over dominant pedal, linking with recapitulation.
Bb major – F major.	F minor – Bb major -> dominant pedal.	

Fig. 1-4: Brahms – Cello Sonata No. 1, first movement, plan of development

In general, Bridge's problems with development can often be traced back to the lyrical character of his themes, which contrast with the dynamic units typical of Beethoven and Brahms. A more fundamental technical insecurity can be sensed in this work particularly, however, given the unimaginative treatment of the motivic units of, for instance, the opening phrase of the first subject and the homophonic phrase, both of which would lend themselves to more creative variation. Such potential is further limited by the lyricism of much subsequent principal material. Perhaps Bridge's treatment of material is more closely related to Dvořák than Brahms, and there are also parallels with Grieg and French romantics such as Gounod and Fauré. The influence of Schubert may also be relevant here, although Bridge lacks Schubert's self-assurance; the monumental sonata structures of Franck (whose works were performed frequently at the RCM), for instance in the Piano Quintet, may have been a detrimental influence, encouraging Bridge to attempt long and elaborate development sections before he had gained the technical maturity to do so successfully. The systematic development of material throughout entire movements found in Brahms's music, meanwhile, does not come naturally to Bridge, whose themes tend to be more static in their treatment. This is increasingly significant in the subsequent minor-key works, where first subject themes tend to be more sustained, emphasising contrast between melodic themes rather than Brahmsian integration and developing variation of motivic units. In Bridge's recapitulations, for instance, first subject material tends to be reconfigured rather than developed, and references are usually brief, distilled versions of the original.

In the arch-form works and shorter pieces that Bridge produced after leaving the RCM, the earlier problems with development are simply avoided, while in later works development sections tend to be more concise and economical, the handling of material more creative (even when consistently sustained and lyrical, such as in the Cello Sonata). That his early efforts seem somewhat contrived and unconvincing by comparison is perhaps not surprising, even in the work of a student as talented as Bridge. In other respects Bridge's technical ability is remarkable, for instance in the confident handling of contrapuntal textures, irregular phrase lengths, often through extension, and occasional flashes of the harmonic imagination that eventually led Bridge to develop an alternative approach to harmonic function.

In the second movement we find an enduring aspect of Bridge's musical personality: his light-hearted but extremely polished *scherzando* style. While his concept of the scherzo is traditional (minor key, triple or compound time), the tone employed again

suggests Dvořak or the lightness of Mendelssohn or Schumann – what Jean-Michel Nectoux called ‘the fantastic nocturnal dance of the German Romantics’ – rather than Brahms or Beethoven, although a French influence is also probable (particularly Fauré).<sup>17</sup> Bridge’s early scherzi are invariably arranged in ternary (scherzo and trio) form. While this ‘nocturnal dance’ has some association with pastoralism, it is only in later works that a truly pastoral tone creeps in, whether idyllic or ‘rustic’ and boisterous. All of these approaches contain an element of escapism when offset by dramatic or melancholy material (as is almost always the case in Bridge’s music), but what functions as a mere diversion in the early period becomes increasingly integrated into the musical logic of later works, both as a structural device and in what it signifies. This process coincides with a subtle expansion of emotional range, exemplified by both the gentle intermezzo style employed in the First String Quartet and an increasing grimness of tone in subsequent works.

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 1-4) is marked 'Allegro' and 'p'. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the upper strings and a pizzicato bass line. The second system (bars 5-8) shows a dynamic shift to 'mf' and includes 'arco' markings for the lower strings. The notation includes various articulations and dynamic markings throughout.

Ex. 1-15: String Quartet in B flat, second movement, bars 1 - 8  
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<sup>17</sup> Jean-Michel Nectoux, ‘Gabriel Fauré’, in *The New Grove Twentieth-Century French Masters* (London: Macmillan, 1986), 20.

Ex. 1-16: String Quartet in B flat, second movement, bars 61 - 64  
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Ex. 1-17: String Quartet in B flat, second movement, bars 81 - 89  
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The scherzo opens with a typically mercurial theme in G minor (Ex. 1-15), the antecedent phrase again providing the most pervasive material (motif *b1* in particular – *b1'* is an immediate derivation by inversion), while the consequent phrase is enlivened by rhythmic invention and an effective use of extension, creating a phrase structure



perhaps reminiscent of Haydn (although, as already noted, irregularity of phrase lengths is a pervasive feature of Bridge's music, suggesting that this held a fundamental technical and aesthetic appeal for him). After several statements and elaborations of the theme, motif *b1* accumulates momentum, leading to a second theme in F minor (Ex. 1-16), played by the second violin and viola. The first violin, meanwhile, interjects derivations of *b1*. After a number of statements of the second theme, *b1* links to a short transitional passage derived from the first theme (Ex. 1-17, using motifs *b1* and *b2* in reverse order), once again displaying considerable harmonic imagination, leading from D flat major to (eventually) G minor. The diminished fifth outlined by that progression is mirrored in the trio, and later in the coda, in interesting ways.

The first theme is restated *fortissimo*, first in its original form, then with a new continuation linking it to the trio. In G major, the trio is characterised by continuous quavers, the first segment (Ex. 1-18) being repeated, the second (Ex. 1-19) deriving material from the first by inversion (compare *c1* and *c2* with *d1* and *d2*). The phrase lengths combine symmetry with irregularity, two seven-bar phrases creating a parallel

Ex. 1-18: String Quartet in B flat, second movement, bars 129 - 138

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Ex. 1-19: String Quartet in B flat, second movement, bars 145 - 151

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period, to which two cadential bars are added, creating a sixteen-bar unit, bringing to mind Stanford's recommendation to 'vary the number of bars in your phrases, and be careful to balance them satisfactorily to the ear.'<sup>18</sup> While more flowing, the texture of the trio is also more contrapuntal than that of the scherzo, creating contrast of both texture and character. Following the second segment, dominant seventh arpeggios, first on A flat then on D (note the diminished fifth), lead to a restatement of the initial trio material. The original antecedent is preserved, but is then extended towards a climactic final statement with inverted texture (Ex. 1-20) over a dominant pedal. This is followed by a short, sustained link leading back to the scherzo (which is repeated almost entirely).

Ex. 1-20: String Quartet in B flat, second movement, bars 193 - 197

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<sup>18</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, 47.

A short coda rounds off the movement; it is further dominated by first theme antecedent material, followed by cadential chords (Ex. 1-21): D flat major – A flat major – D major – G major. Both the inner and outer chords outline diminished fifths, recalling progressions from both scherzo and trio. The uncomplicated overall harmonic structure of the movement ensures that the ultimate perfect cadence is heard as sufficiently conclusive to counter such local harmonic disturbance as provided by the preceding chords, which also appear less disruptive as they relate to earlier harmonic features. The possibilities for contrast between tonic minor and major modes are admirably handled, and are further explored in the following movement. The remarkable economy of material in both scherzo and trio, meanwhile, was to become increasingly pronounced in Bridge's music, and is a defining feature of his scherzo and (later) intermezzo movements.

Ex. 1-21: String Quartet in B flat, second movement, bars 235 - 238

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In the third movement we find Bridge at his most lyrical, again approximating the style of Mendelssohn and Schumann more closely than the solemn *adagio* style of Beethoven or Brahms. The first theme (in E flat – Ex. 1-22) spans ten bars, a continuous melody extending over two phrases conceived along characteristically asymmetrical lines. A prominent diminished fifth (*e*) is placed at the beginning of the theme, which dominates the outer sections of the relatively straightforward ternary form. A second theme (Ex. 1-23) directly succeeds the first, leading back to more varied and prolonged treatment of the first theme after 18 bars. Following a final *fortissimo* statement, a short closing phrase featuring a motif taken from bar two of the main theme (Ex. 1-24) links to the central section. This arrangement continues the preponderance of local ternary substructures in Bridge's music, whose obvious appeal lies in the dynamic created by

the sense of 'return' to principal material after a brief contrast, and the wide variety of possibilities offered by this scheme. As it often operates at the phrase level, it does not appear cumbersome, although later explorations of more continuous/unfolding schemes provide a more varied range of structural possibilities, appropriate to Bridge's growing propensity for thematic/motivic integration.

Andante

Ex. 1-22: String Quartet in B flat, third movement, bars 1 - 5  
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Ex. 1-23: String Quartet in B flat, third movement, bars 10 - 14  
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Ex. 1-24: String Quartet in B flat, third movement, first violin, bar 51  
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Moving smoothly to C minor after an abrupt change in texture, the principal theme of the central ('B') section is introduced by the cello (Ex. 1-25), followed by a first violin counterstatement. When the theme returns to the cello (Ex. 1-26), the first violin continues with elaborate melodic figures combining with elements of the theme. A short but more explicit reference to the principal B theme eventually returns in the cello part. This leads directly to an interruption of texture featuring the grace-note motif shown in Ex. 1-25 (viola part) and relating in harmonic content to the instability of the theme, bringing the central section to an abrupt close. The gesture is disruptive, distilling precisely what is unsettling about the B theme into a single, concentrated musical event. While the single reference to the closing motif and subsequent return of principal ('A') material is somewhat simplistic in effect, the violent contrast it creates (and which is evidently the intention) has parallels in much of Bridge's later music; the emphasis on

Ex. 1-25: String Quartet in B flat, third movement, bars 56 - 59

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Ex. 1-26: String Quartet in B flat, third movement, first violin and cello, bars 65 - 67

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contrast aims to throw the opposing musical characters into relief – we are intended to hear the idyllic lyricism *in relation to* a more troubled conception, and vice versa. This element becomes more pronounced and aesthetically significant in the minor-key works that follow, tying in with the type of concept and articulation of beauty already discussed (see pp. 7-11).

The first theme of the A section is reintroduced in C major rather than E flat, proceeding in a similar manner as before to the second theme. After two bars, however, a six-bar elision of material leads back to the original key signature (Ex. 1-27), in which the elided material is now stated in B flat major. This leads to a return of the first theme in the tonic, a procedure clearly prophetic of the harmonic arches used in later works and capitalising on the range of possibilities provided by the ternary arrangement of material (indeed, on the interlocking ternary forms used, welding them together convincingly). Some fragmentation and chromaticism (and a short interruption by material derived from the central section) are followed by a short concluding section of closing material. Stanford appears to have favoured such unifying devices in ternary forms, advising students ‘always to write a short coda for the conclusion, and endeavour to combine in it the ideas of the minuet and of the trio, so clamping together the whole as a small work of art.’<sup>19</sup> The implication of cyclic unity in this advice is a fundamental feature of Bridge’s forms, and its application across multi-movement works was to become particularly significant and enduring. There is thus some complexity to this

Ex. 1-27: String Quartet in B flat, third movement, bars 103 - 107

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<sup>19</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, 77.

apparently straightforward movement, which furthermore explores a number of features of Bridge's style and technique that were to become increasingly important.

While the deployment of material is basically straightforward, it is also more resourceful than in preceding movements, almost all of the material deriving from three main themes. Similarly, the tonal structure (Fig. 1-5) is simple yet highly effective, the potential tensions between tonic, relative minor, tonic minor and dominant keys exploited more skilfully than in other movements of this work and the later student compositions, and giving a foretaste of Bridge's harmonic procedures in his later substantial single movement works, particularly the Phantasies. It is notable that Bridge's handling of technical matters and exploration of stylistic elements is often more secure in less formally challenging movements throughout his early output; this skill and ingenuity of construction would soon come to define his more formally ambitious sonata movements.

A		B		A			
(11)	(29)	(54)	(93)	(103)	(117)	(127)	
First theme	Second theme	First theme	Largely monothematic	First theme	Second theme	First theme	Reference to B theme and closing motif
Eb major	Eb major, moving to Gb major	Eb major	C minor	C major	C major, moving through G to Bb major	Eb major	

Fig. 1-5: String Quartet in B flat, plan of third movement

The final movement returns to the original tonic, B flat, and is cast in sonata form. Many of the features and procedures observed in the first movement are again immediately apparent. Two phrases are presented in succession (Exx. 1-28 and 1-29), a motif from the first (*e* – the same principal motif as in the scherzo) being used pervasively (note also the prominent augmented fourth, B $\flat$ -E, at the beginning of the violin parts). The use of material is considerably more balanced than in the first movement, however, with both phrases receiving approximately equal attention. The preoccupation with diminished fifths is continued as the emphatically thematic (i.e. independent) transition material enters in E major (Ex. 1-30).

**Presto**

Ex. 1-28: String Quartet in B flat, fourth movement, bars 1 - 5

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Ex. 1-29: String Quartet in B flat, fourth movement, bars 13 - 16

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Ex. 1-30: String Quartet in B flat, fourth movement, bars 51 - 53

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The second subject simply sidesteps to F major (Ex. 1-31), its thematic unity and economy being less pronounced than in most of Bridge's sonata movements. The theme is passed between instruments, and a linking section with a somewhat whimsical first violin part leads to an independent closing section (Ex. 1-32) This has echoes of Grieg (for instance the *Melodies*, op. 53, and *Norwegian Airs*, op. 63), particularly in the use of dominant 13th chords, which have already featured in the earlier movements (for instance the last chord of the first movement introduction).

The musical score for Ex. 1-31 shows a string quartet in B-flat major, fourth movement, bars 63-70. The first violin part begins with a melodic phrase marked 'tranquillo' and 'pp'. The first viola part mirrors this melody. The second violin and second viola parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes. The tempo is marked 'a Tempo'.

Ex. 1-31: String Quartet in B flat, fourth movement, bars 63 - 70

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The musical score for Ex. 1-32 shows a string quartet in B-flat major, fourth movement, bars 111-115. The tempo is marked 'Poco Meno Mosso'. The first violin part begins with a melodic phrase marked 'p'. The first viola part mirrors this melody. The second violin and second viola parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes. Dynamics include 'p', 'mf', and 'mp'.

Ex. 1-32: String Quartet in B flat, fourth movement, bars 111 - 115

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The development opens in an uncharacteristically forthright manner – many development sections in Bridge's sonata form movements open quietly before gradually gathering momentum. Here first subject (first phrase) material asserts itself, initially in

F major but tending towards the minor mode in the subsequent *piano* syncopated chords. After renewed alternation of these elements, the remainder of the development proceeds briskly and logically, from two versions of the second phrase material to the introduction of the transition theme, which is developed and built up to a *fortissimo* climax that reintroduces first subject material from both phrases (Ex. 1-33), quickly subsiding before the recapitulation. Treatment of material and the increased concision and economy in particular improve on the first movement; this sets another precedent, as development sections in finales generally tend to be more concise than in first movements. The first subject recapitulation is again curtailed, six bars of first phrase material (a persistent G $\flat$  overlapping from the development adds colour to the first three) leading to an emphatic statement of the second phrase. Climactic statements of the first phrase return at the end of the first subject recapitulation, and again after the closing material to conclude the movement. In the interim, the transition and second subject (neither of which appeared in the development) are recapitulated with little variation.

Ex. 1-33: String Quartet in B flat, fourth movement, bars 210 - 211

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Bridge preserves the relationship of transition and second subject, simply beginning the transition in A major. While this is a convenient solution, it does little to foster a sense of logical progression; both the transition and the second subject are arrived at by way of abrupt progressions in local harmony, weakening the sense of a release of tonal tension. The tonic is reached by a series of harmonic sidesteps, and this is not helped by

the somewhat oblique arrival at the tonic at the outset of the recapitulation. While the latter achieves a striking effect, a more emphatic approach to the second subject's absorption into the tonic would be desirable to ensure a sense of logical resolution. Perhaps an impulse to experiment harmonically is to blame, in which case the shortcomings of the student works should be understood as a necessary step in Bridge's search for a personal style. In his next substantial chamber works, the E minor String Quintet and C minor Piano Quartet, the impulse to experiment with and depart from harmonic and formal conventions is further indulged, with mixed results.

\* \* \*

### String Quintet in E minor

- (i) *Allegro appassionato*
- (ii) *Andante ma non troppo*
- (iii) *Presto*
- (iv) *Allegro molto vivace*

Written six months after the B flat String Quartet, this is Bridge's earliest surviving minor-key chamber work, beginning a prolonged engagement with the structural complexities of minor-key sonata forms. Another enduring feature of the chamber music of the following years is the forthright opening statement of the principal theme; the Phantasie String Quartet, the original version of the Piano Quintet, the Phantasy Piano Trio and Phantasy Piano Quartet all have similarly dramatic opening gestures.

In the String Quintet, Bridge sets himself several new challenges, particularly in some of his formal choices. The opening of the first movement presents us with a type of phrase structure not encountered in the B flat String Quartet; the subtlety here lies not in the phrase lengths, but in the organisation of four phrases (Ex. 2-1), each four bars in length; this is unusual in itself, as Bridge tends to favour irregular phrase lengths, overlaps and extensions to enliven his themes. The first phrase presents the first (and, once again, most pervasive) theme of the first subject in unison, followed by two phrases that could be interpreted as a period or as consequent and extension to the first

**Allegro Appassionato**

The musical score is presented in three systems, each containing five staves. The first system begins with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and transitions to piano (*p*) in the second measure. The second system includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking and an *arco* instruction. The third system is marked fortissimo (*f*) and *marcato*. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 2-1: String Quintet in E minor, first movement, bars 1 - 16

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phrase (the omission of the last phrase in the recapitulation gives credence to this interpretation). A further contrasting phrase, in Bridge's favourite emphatic,

homophonic mould, follows leading to a *fortissimo* statement of the first theme. As in the B flat String Quartet the result is a ternary arrangement that links to the transition (Ex. 2-2).

Ex. 2-2: String Quintet in E minor, first movement, bars 43 - 45

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The role of the transition section here is to create additional tension; in the recapitulation the transitional material is related to the first subject, providing a sense of integration. In his later tonal works, particularly the Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata, Bridge was to use his transitions to create additional harmonic distance and thus tension between first and second subjects; perhaps here we have his earliest attempt at this procedure. After the modal F minor of the transition, the second subject's G major sounds sufficiently fresh after the references to G major during the first subject. The second subject (Ex. 2-3) is treated in a typically exhaustive manner, including a version in rhythmic diminution (Ex. 2-4), a technique that is exploited to greater effect in the final movement. The alternating thirds that open the theme relate to the preceding transition. After various counterstatements and a climactic *fortissimo* statement, a sprightly closing theme is introduced (Ex. 2-5), leading to a repetition of the entire exposition. In doing this, Bridge sets himself a considerable challenge in the development, as maintaining interest in his material is both more important and more difficult after the double exposition. Before examining the development section, attention should be drawn to the rhythmic/metric interest created by Bridge's material: the main themes of the first subject, transition, second subject and closing section could

just as easily occur in  $\frac{2}{4}$  as in the movement's  $\frac{3}{4}$  time signature. This creates a feeling of irregularity within phrases (explaining Bridge's uncharacteristic preference for strict four-bar units) and also is used to create contrast between statements and derivations of a theme (see, for instance, Ex. 2-6, cf. Ex. 2-1).

Ex. 2-3: String Quintet in E minor, first movement, bars 52 - 55

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Ex. 2-4: String Quintet in E minor, first movement, second violin, bars 72 - 73

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Ex. 2-5: String Quintet in E minor, first movement, bars 96 - 100

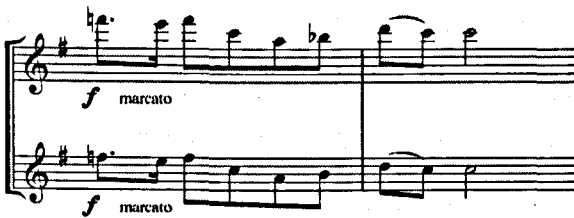
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A moment of formal ambiguity is created after the repetition of the exposition: a calm and lyrical statement of the first subject theme in G major, which sounds more like a codetta than the opening of the development. This is one of a number of features of the work resembling procedures used by Brahms, in this case in the Second Violin Sonata. The placement of the material conforms to Bridge's habit of beginning development sections with quiet reintroductions of first subject material. The effect here is formally ambiguous, also suggesting an extension of sonata principles: not only does the second subject now require tonal resolution, but so too does the first subject, having been absorbed into the secondary tonal area. While the Brahms Sonata is in a major key, Bridge's movement is not; the need this creates, for a clear separation of tonal areas conducive to emphatic tonal resolution and closure, is more difficult to engineer in a minor-key movement and is only partly met in the recapitulation. Unfortunately, Bridge does not redress the resulting imbalance in the finale, where similar problems escalate. As we will see, he was to deal with such problems more effectively in his experiments with sonata-arch.

Bridge's manipulation of the character of his themes also calls for comment, the strong, masculine material of the first subject apparently being a viable minor-key equivalent to that observed in the String Quartet. Both the lyrical G major statement between exposition and development, and the rhythmic-metric ambiguity of the material may, however, be seen to undermine this identity, and it is one that rarely recurs in Bridge's later music, a melancholy or tragic tone generally being preferred. A prominent feature of the first subjects of both Quartet and Quintet is a sense of melodic fragmentation, whether through the structuring of sub-phrases in the Quartet or the space resulting from metric ambiguity in the Quintet. The flowing melodies of later works emphasise the contrast in character, their structural implications being far-reaching and undoubtedly encouraging Bridge's formal experiments.

After the serene first theme variant, suspended between exposition and development, a series of abrupt harmonic shifts, often involving intervals of a third or less, define Bridge's attempt to create or maintain tension. The concluding D major chord of the initial G major section (eight bars) leads unexpectedly to G flat major, prefiguring Bridge's later idiosyncratic use of augmented sixth chords; after a further eight bars a lively derivation of the first theme is introduced in F major (Ex. 2-6). This series of semitone moves is interrupted as the derivation moves first to E flat major, then to D flat major before coming to rest in C major. The resulting sequence of

sidesteps is similar to procedures already encountered in Bridge's transition sections, and while colourful, is not helpful in giving the development a sense of purposeful progress. While the harmonic movement towards C major suggests an increase of tension, C major is itself at a lower level than the tonic (related to the subdominant and relative major); the sense of continued tension this creates (through the initial harmonic movement and the subsequent progress towards the tonic, see Fig. 2-1) is ingenious but ultimately confusing, bearing little resemblance to the purposeful harmonic structures of later development sections such as those found in the Second Quartet and Cello Sonata.



Ex. 2-6: String Quintet in E minor, first movement, violins, bars 137 - 138  
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(121)	(129)	(155)	(186)	
First subject is absorbed into secondary tonal area (G major).	Chromatic interruption of G $\flat$ major, and through F major, E $\flat$ major and D $\flat$ major to C major, tending latterly towards F minor.	Second subject material is introduced in F minor.	Alternation between first and second subject material.	G pedal, preparing for recapitulation, eventual augmented chord on G acting as dominant substitute.

Fig. 2-1: String Quintet in E minor, first movement, plan of development

Interestingly, the main theme of the second subject is not used; instead Bridge derives new material from other motifs used in the second subject exposition, for instance from the continuation that follows its first full statement. Thus the second subject is invoked by association rather than through an explicit statement. Given the double exposition and full recapitulation of the subject, this is desirable to avoid monotony. After more abrupt and diffuse harmonic movement, a G pedal is established in the cello part, the eventual G augmented chord acting as a dominant substitute which is evidently intended to neutralise that tension accrued by the first subject's absorption



into G major at the outset of the recapitulation. The material used refers back to the link leading to the repetition of the exposition, achieving a sense of 'thematic preparation'. As in the Quartet, the first subject recapitulation is severely curtailed. The transition theme, meanwhile, appears to grow out of the first subject, perhaps counteracting the effect of this curtailment, while simultaneously providing a sense of clarification and integration. The second subject is stated in its entirety in E major, followed by the closing theme. The movement closes in E minor after a short *fortissimo* statement of the first theme. A number of technical features are more advanced or successful than in the B flat String Quartet, particularly in the handling of second subject material and thematic integration. The effect of the somewhat fragmented first subject recapitulation is to focus resolution onto the second subject and the subsequent return of the tonic minor, looking ahead to the C minor Piano Quartet and later arch-forms. While this resolves the tension created by the G major sections in the exposition, the failure to replicate such a resolution in the finale will prove to be critical.

In the Quintet, Bridge places the slow movement before the scherzo, and it is one of his most perfect early achievements. The simple ternary structure is enriched by a number of imaginative harmonic procedures and subtleties of thematic organisation, some of which build on the features observed in the slow movement of the B flat String Quartet. The first theme (Ex. 2-7), in C major, presents a pair of two-bar ideas played by the second violin. The continuation leads to a second theme (Ex. 2-8), a parallel period which is stated only once and is followed directly by a return to the first theme. A different continuation makes prominent use of a motif perhaps derived from the G-A-G figures of the opening bars of the movement (Ex. 2-9), acting as a transition to the central section.

Characteristically, the central ('B') section in A minor makes use of only one theme (Ex. 2-10), which, like the first theme, consists of a pair of two-bar ideas. The first idea is related to the transitional motif as well as the second sub-phrase of the first theme (most obviously in terms of rhythm, cf. bar 3 of Ex. 2-7). After the initial statement of the theme, it is however the second idea that is used repeatedly; the first idea eventually overlaps with it to lead back to the second A section, creating a fluid link between sections, mediated by the transitional motif. The principal A section theme reappears in a form similar to its first appearance, but in A major, following on naturally from the previous A minor. The second theme follows as before, reintroducing C major, and establishing it as the tonic as it leads back to a final statement of the first theme. The

transitional motif leads to a short reference to material from the B section: only the first idea is used, and the movement concludes immediately afterwards, again making reference to the transitional motif.

**Andante ma non troppo**

The musical score for Ex. 2-7 consists of five staves. The first staff is marked 'dolce' and begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second staff also starts with *p* and transitions to *mf* in the third measure. The third and fourth staves follow a similar pattern, starting with *p* and moving to *mf*. The fifth staff begins with *p* and ends with *mf*. The tempo is 'Andante ma non troppo'.

Ex. 2-7: String Quintet in E minor, second movement, bars 1 - 4  
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The musical score for Ex. 2-8 consists of five staves. The first staff starts with pianissimo (*pp*) and moves to *mf* in the fifth measure. The second and third staves also start with *pp* and move to *mf*. The fourth and fifth staves follow the same dynamic progression. The tempo is 'Andante ma non troppo'.

Ex. 2-8: String Quintet in E minor, second movement, bars 11 - 15  
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The musical score for Ex. 2-9 is a single staff in 4/4 time, showing a melodic line with a mix of eighth and quarter notes. The key signature has one flat (B minor).

Ex. 2-9: String Quintet in E minor, second movement, transitional motif  
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The image shows a musical score for a String Quintet in E minor, second movement, bars 35-38. It consists of five staves. The top two staves are for vocal parts, both labeled 'sotto voce' and starting with a piano 'p' dynamic. The bottom three staves are for string parts. The bass line (bottom staff) is marked 'pizz.' (pizzicato). The middle two staves (violin and viola) feature a triplet of eighth notes. The score is written in E minor and includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 2-10: String Quintet in E minor, second movement, bars 35 - 38

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Bridge's deployment of material is carefully judged, the A sections making use of two contrasting themes which are offset to maximum effect in the second A section. The B section makes use of material from a single phrase, the first idea relating to material from the A section. The two sections are thus linked by a shared motivic unit, whose integrative role is emphasised by its reappearance at the end of the movement, recalling the B section (in line with Stanford's advice to 'clamp' a ternary movement together in a coda) through material derived from A. The harmonic scheme is highly characteristic, making the most of relative/tonic major/minor relationships. In fact, the harmonic structure is almost identical to the slow movement of the B flat String Quartet, although the return to the tonic is perhaps more effective here, achieving a more emphatic sense of 'return', and the opening A major of the second A section is more carefully balanced by later references to 'flat' keys – first D minor and G minor, then F minor in the final part. The avoidance of E minor and G major removes the movement from the tonal tensions of the outer movements more comprehensively, while the tonic, C major, combines with the tonic of the scherzo, A minor, to create not only contrast but also a logical sequence of keys. The inner movements here represent a linked pair of escapes from the preoccupations of the more weighty outer movements; in time Bridge would develop methods of contextualising and integrating such 'escapes' into the larger emotional progression of an entire work. Bridge's ability to create exquisite single movement structures in the inner movements of both the B flat String Quartet and E minor String Quintet represents a technical basis responsible for much of

the success of the Phantasies and shorter works such as the *Novelletten* and *Idylls*, and (as mentioned in relation to the Quartet) a number of technical features are re-encountered in those later works.

The third movement once again showcases Bridge's gracefully exuberant *scherzando* manner, examples of which can be found throughout much of Bridge's tonal music, and traces of which are also clearly evident in his later style. Basic features such as metre and tonality initially follow Classical precedents, and devices such as pizzicato, staccato, syncopation and hemiola abound, with contrast being created in flowing, major-key trio sections, usually in duple time. The scherzo of the String Quintet is notable for being Bridge's first movement in which both sections derive their entire material from their openings, building on the economy of material in the corresponding movement of the B flat String Quartet. No alternate or contrasting themes are used – the scherzo derives all of its material from the first 18 bars (Ex. 2-11). The section that follows, for instance, grows out of bars 5 and 6, while the rapid figure featured in bar 15 also reappears. A derivation of the cadential material (bars 17-18) follows (Ex. 2-12), introducing increased harmonic interest, moving from G minor to F minor, but A minor is quickly restored as the tonic, concluding the scherzo with the cadential material from the first section.

A brief link prepares for the new key of the trio, which is similarly based on a single theme (Ex. 2-13), in F major. This theme is repeated exhaustively, being passed between parts in varied but immediately recognisable statements. A simple decorative motif is introduced as an accompanying figure (Ex. 2-14), giving rise to new derivations without disrupting the constant flow of counterstatements of the main theme. As in the scherzo, harmony fluctuates but remains rooted in the initial tonic, F major, and the section ends with minimal preparation for the return to A minor. The scherzo is repeated *da capo*. Similarities with the scherzo of the B flat String Quartet are remarkable, including the thematic economy and unity, and the use of relatively simple and stable tonal schemes, features that persist in many of Bridge's later scherzi. There is here the slightest foretaste of the violence of some later scherzi, such as that of the Second String Quartet, in some of the more emphatic dance-like gestures. Its juxtaposition with the often pastoral tone of the trio (particularly in terms of texture) is significant, foreshadowing a pair of expressive elements central to Bridge's aesthetic conception in his chamber music.

Presto

pp

pp

pizz.

p

pizz.

pizz.

mf cresc.

f

mf cresc.

f

arco

mf cresc.

f

arco

mf cresc.

f

arco

f

ff

ff

ff p

ff

ff

Ex. 2-11: String Quintet in E minor, third movement, bars 1 - 19

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Ex. 2-12: String Quintet in E minor, third movement, bars 61 - 64  
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*L'istesso Tempo*

Ex. 2-13: String Quintet in E minor, third movement, bars 100 - 106  
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Ex. 2-14: String Quintet in E minor, third movement, cello, bar 128  
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The final movement opens with a short motif in E minor (Ex. 2-15) that comes to dominate the first subject area. It alternates with two *forte* homophonic phrases (Ex. 2-16) that are related in character, as well as suggesting subtle motivic connections with the main theme. The typical ternary arrangement of material within the subject is here

particularly reminiscent of Brahms, the finale of whose Second String Quintet opens in a similar manner (Ex. 2-17a), with a minor key semiquaver motif followed by a *forte* homophonic phrase in G major. The fact that both of Bridge's homophonic phrases are centred on G major creates something of a structural problem: as G major has already been established in the first subject area, its impact as a contrasting key area in the second subject is minimised, while the first subject area's identification with the tonic is weakened, leading to problems in the recapitulation. In the Brahms Quintet, G major is the tonic, approached obliquely from the B minor opening. Perhaps a more pertinent comparison is thus with Brahms's Third Piano Trio, in C minor, a close contemporary of the Second String Quintet and an important influence on Bridge's next chamber work, a Piano Quartet similarly in C minor. Again Brahms uses a ternary first subject, with a rhythmic *forte* homophonic phrase separating two closely related versions of an initial theme, the first introductory in character, the second linking to a transition. Like Bridge's homophonic phrases, Brahms begins in the relative major, but this is immediately deflected by the dominant towards the tonic major, balancing the intrusion of Eb.



Ex. 2-15: String Quintet in E minor, fourth movement, first viola, bars 1 - 2

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Ex. 2-16a: String Quintet in E minor, fourth movement, bars 10 - 13

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Ex. 2-16b: String Quintet in E minor, fourth movement, bars 20 - 30  
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Vivace ma non troppo presto

Ex. 2-17a: Brahms - String Quintet No. 2 in G major, op. 111,  
 fourth movement, bar 1 & bars 13 - 15



Ex. 2-17b: Brahms - Piano Trio No. 3 in C minor, op. 101, first movement, bars 11 - 15

Once again, the transition (Ex. 2-18) grows out of the preceding material (most obviously motifs *a* and *b*, cf. Ex. 2-16b), leading promptly to the monothematic second subject (Ex. 2-19), which is eventually transformed into a closing motif (linking to the development) by means of rhythmic alteration similar to that observed in the first movement (Ex. 2-20, cf. Ex. 2-5). First subject material in G major opens the development, as in the first movement. The progression of material and harmonic structure is again somewhat fragmented and aimless, until Bridge combines first and second subject material, leading to an overlap of development and recapitulation, the first viola reintroducing the main first subject material in the tonic while the violins

Ex. 2-18: String Quintet in E minor, fourth movement, bars 43 - 49

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Ex. 2-19: String Quintet in E minor, fourth movement, bars 57 - 64

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Ex. 2-20: String Quintet in E minor, fourth movement, bars 133 - 138

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persist with material from the previous phrase (Ex. 2-21). The first *forte* homophonic phrase follows, leading directly to the original continuation of the second homophonic phrase, which is itself elided (wisely, given its extensive use in the development). This leads, via a short altered version of the transition section concentrating mainly on motif *a*, to the second subject in C major. The key is quickly diverted to E major, and many counterstatements follow. The closing section leads to a short reprise of the principal theme of the first movement, followed by a concluding statement of first subject (finale) material, both in the tonic minor. References to principal first movement material to conclude multi-movement works are a lasting feature of Bridge's music; apart from

Stanford's influence, Smetana's First String Quartet is a likely model (although Bridge's conclusions tend to be more conciliatory), as are the cyclic elements of Franck's and Grieg's chamber music; as noted by Rosen, it is a procedure found widely in Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms and Tchaikovsky, all significant influences on Bridge.<sup>20</sup>

Ex. 2-21: String Quintet in E minor, fourth movement, bars 252 - 262

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In this movement, Bridge does not quite solve the harmonic challenges he sets himself, mainly due to his introduction of G major during the first subject. As a result, the G major opening of the development does not represent a particular advance on the first subject exposition, and the confusion of tonal centres is not solved in the

<sup>20</sup> Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 88.

recapitulation, where the introduction of the second subject in C major further complicates matters, making the subsequent sidestep to E major sound fresher but less emphatic. The move to C major seems like a release of tension, particularly given the previous references to G major, making the subsequent move to E major seem like an increase in tension in relation to both C and G. More importantly, through the use of this progression, neither C nor E major achieve the emphatic sense of resolution that the tonic-key recapitulation of second subject material should represent. After the overlap of development and recapitulation, and the renewed intrusion of G major into the first subject recapitulation, the assertion of E minor at the end of the movement lacks authority. Perhaps an ongoing concern with the character of his themes was to blame – the homophonic phrases of the first subject clearly represent an intention to provide robust, vigorous first subject material; while the use of the relative major enhances their effect as representations of stability, it interferes with the harmonic logic of the movement. In subsequent minor-key works, Bridge generally resigns himself to writing lyrical principal themes, while the First String Quartet is an early example of the sort of violent first subject mirrored in the expressionism of the much later Third and Fourth Quartets; examples of ‘healthy’ vigour in first subjects are hereafter rare.

As with the harmonic sidesteps observed in the B flat String Quartet, it is likely that Mendelssohn’s E minor String Quartet, op. 44 no. 2, was a significant influence; this work was evidently popular at the RCM during Bridge’s time there. In the first movement, Mendelssohn uses an interrupted progression (from a dominant chord on F# to G major) to arrive at the second subject; at the end of the development section he uses a similar progression, with both the key, C major, and second subject material ‘interrupting’ a perfect cadence and the reintroduction of first subject material. The interruption is short, linking seamlessly with first subject material, but obscuring the sense of arrival usually associated with the beginning of a recapitulation. Mendelssohn is, however, careful to progress to the subsequent second subject recapitulation proper via clear dominant harmony and subsequently resume first subject material, again with simple diatonic harmony. Another possible model are the sidesteps found in the first movement of Grieg’s G minor String Quartet, where the reintroduction of principal material after the development is prepared by an augmented sixth progression, and harmony is deflected towards the Neapolitan after the first subject recapitulation, before the tonic major is eventually reached.

Bridge was clearly fascinated by the possibilities presented by the progression between related major and minor keys, but in this case his management of harmonic structure and tension is ultimately unsuccessful. While the handling of developmental techniques remains largely unchanged, the concise organisation of material in the first movement is indicative of things to come, as is the use of increasingly fluid transitions between sections. Thematic cross-references between movements, meanwhile, become the norm in his multi-movement chamber works, usually in the form of a return of principal (i.e. first subject) first movement material towards the end of the finale. Interestingly, Stanford was similarly experimenting with complex types of cyclic unity during Bridge's time at the RCM, for instance in his Clarinet Concerto (1902) and String Quintet No. 1 (1903).

\* \* \*

### Piano Quartet in C minor

(i) *Allegro ma non troppo*

(ii) *Scherzo: Presto*

(iii) *Poco adagio*

(iv) *Presto*

In this work a number of the problems encountered in the earlier student works are addressed, while new challenges are set, particularly in terms of texture. Bridge's first major student work, a piano trio, has not survived – but the choice of string quartet and quintet for his next two large-scale works perhaps represents an avoidance of the difficulties posed by the combination of strings and piano. A number of influences are identifiable, including the piano quartets of Brahms and Fauré (both of whom also wrote C minor piano quartets), Brahms's C minor Piano Trio and Franck's Piano Quintet. The opening of the work, for instance, resembles that of the Brahms C minor Quartet, where a subdued first statement, principally by the strings, is followed by a more emphatic statement by the piano in octaves, accompanied by the strings (in the Brahms Quartet it is the repeated tonic note, Bridge uses the full chord). The influence

of Brahms is confirmed in the slow third movement, with its E major tonic and protracted opening cello melody. While the opening texture of the scherzo is reminiscent of the corresponding movements of Fauré's Piano Quartets, there are also several instances of overactive and over-complicated textures, perhaps betraying the influence of Franck's complex textures (for instance those using *tremolando* strings) in parts of his Piano Quintet. The often 'symphonic' textures of Rachmaninov's Second Piano Trio may also have been influential; the opening of that work, with its repeated piano figure and tragic tone certainly has parallels in Bridge's later chamber music with piano.

The first movement resolves some of the formal problems noted in the previous work, principally through the use of a prototypical sonata-arch form. Later Bridge was to experiment more creatively with symmetrical forms, with remarkable results, but in the Piano Quartet he utilises the benefits of arch-form in simple and effective ways. Furthermore, the exposition is more concise than in previous sonata forms – there is no introduction, while the transition section is shorter and less independent, growing directly out of the first subject; the closing section is similarly short and derives from the second subject, also linking well with the beginning of the development, weakening the impression of a self-contained section.

The exposition of the main subject areas follows established patterns: the first subject (C minor) employs one main thematic idea (Ex. 3-1a), a derivation of which

**Allegro ma non troppo**

The musical score consists of four staves. The top three staves are for Violin I, Violin II, and Cello. The bottom two staves are for the Piano. The tempo is 'Allegro ma non troppo'. The key signature is C minor. The first two bars of the music are shown. In the first bar, all instruments play a triplet of eighth notes. The piano part has a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a sixteenth-note figure in the left hand. The second bar continues the triplet in the strings and has a similar piano texture. The piano part has a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a sixteenth-note figure in the left hand. The piano part is marked 'pp'.

Ex. 3-1a: Piano Quartet in C minor, first movement, bars 1 - 2  
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Ex. 3-1b: Piano Quartet in C minor, first movement, bars 8 - 9

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Ex. 3-2: Piano Quartet in C minor, first movement, bars 36 - 40

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creates contrast between statements (Ex. 3-1b), while in the extended second subject (in E<sub>b</sub> major – Ex. 3-2) the combination of piano and strings facilitates imitative entries and varied counterstatements. A reference to the principal first subject motif during the second subject, brief though it is, is unusual, intruding before the final statement of the second subject theme. In this gesture we have the earliest example of an idyll (the lyrical second subject) being ‘invaded’ by a reminder of the grimmer realities

represented by principal material; here, as elsewhere, the effect is to heighten the idyll precisely by exposing its escapist nature. This is achieved more subtly in later works, the most complex example being the Fourth String Quartet. As usual, the beginning of the development is marked by the reintroduction of first subject material. Derivatives of the first and second subjects are used effectively to create considerable momentum. The remainder of the development, leading to dominant preparation and the recapitulation, is perhaps too lengthy – Bridge was soon to recognise the merits of succinct and intense development sections. As a period of repose and stasis at the end of the development, it looks ahead to the first movement of the First String Quartet, but contrasts sharply with the ingenious construction of that work. The development of material represents a distinct advance on the earlier student works, however, resulting in a greater sense of purpose, and creating and maintaining interest more successfully.

The arrangement of material in the recapitulation is unusual, one of a number of compromises between sonata-arch and conventional sonata form found in Bridge's chamber music. A false recapitulation of the main first subject theme is introduced over a dominant pedal – while the melodic parts indicate the tonic, C minor, no root position tonic chord is heard. Instead a brief link leads to C major and the second subject; transition material is omitted. The second subject proceeds as before, followed by an extended closing section leading back to the tonic minor and an extremely brief *fortissimo* statement of the main first subject theme (eight bars, which also include allusions to the second subject in the string parts, perhaps balancing the piano's brief reference to first subject material during the second subject). A twenty-one-bar coda based on the first subject follows, further affirming the tonic minor and bringing the movement to a close. By recapitulating the second subject first, Bridge achieves a more effortless and complete sense of resolution than in the E minor String Quintet. The tonic major is introduced as a viable substitute for the original tonic, having been placed in relation to the implied tonic minor of the preceding first subject reference, while the subsequent reversion to principal material in C minor acts as a further agent of resolution. Curtailment of the first subject, and its appearance either side of the second subject, are characteristic features of Bridge's sonata movements; here these procedures are adapted to significantly enhance the coherence of the movement. The development section remains the least successful, although progress has been made since the String Quintet; treatment of thematic material is more resourceful, the form is more concise, and the harmonic movement leading to the recapitulation is skilfully handled.



The unique arch-form of this movement is a sort of compromise between Bridge's earlier sonata forms and the later arch-forms. Indeed, the outline of the earlier forms is preserved almost exactly; the true recapitulation of the first subject is simply delayed until its last appearance by absorbing the earlier statement into the development, or suspending it between development and recapitulation, rather than allowing the sections to overlap as in the E minor String Quintet. Given the significance of sonata-arch in many subsequent works, this experiment represents a particularly important stage in Bridge's development of his preferred formal procedures. An important model for this unusual arrangement of material is the first movement of Brahms's C minor Piano Trio. Having recalled the introductory version of the first subject's first theme without actually arriving at the tonic, Brahms recapitulates the second subject in C major before returning to the second and third parts of the first subject in the tonic minor. Bridge constructs a further variant of this form in the finale.

As in the previous scherzi, the second movement is characterised by a notable economy of material, all of which derives either from the opening (Ex. 3-3) or the countermelody given in Ex. 3-4. The G minor scherzo leads to a G major trio in simple ternary arrangement (the two themes of the trio are given in Ex. 3-5). The second theme is one of Bridge's more successful textural experiments in the work, although the texture and harmony of the link back to the first theme seem contrived. The texture and harmonic colour of the opening create a somewhat uncanny, phantasmal character,

**Presto**

The musical score consists of four staves. The top three staves are for Violin I, Violin II, and Viola, each marked with 'pizz.' and 'pp'. The bottom two staves are for the Piano, marked with 'pp'. The piano part includes a 'sua' marking above the treble clef staff. Vertical dashed lines indicate bar boundaries.

Ex. 3-3: Piano Quartet in C minor, second movement, bars 1 - 2 & 9 - 10  
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Ex. 3-4: Piano Quartet in C minor, second movement, violin, bars 62 - 67

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Ex. 3-5a: Piano Quartet in C minor, second movement, bars 145 - 149

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Ex. 3-5b: Piano Quartet in C minor, second movement, bars 175 - 179

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presaging the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet. The overall harmonic structure, meanwhile, is characteristically straightforward, with clearly defined tonal centres.

The slow third movement, while not as convincing as the corresponding movements of the earlier works, is again rigorously integrated motivically. The first 'A' section in particular is notable, the second theme deriving from the first (Ex. 3-6) – reminiscent of the first movement's first subject. Motif *a* of the main theme is related to motif *b* in its parallel thirds and chromatic notes, and the themes share the same cadential motif (*c* – the end of the consequent phrase of the first theme can be seen in bar 12, the first bar of Ex. 3-6b). The first theme returns, followed by a brief link to the B section. Although the material of the central section is initially striking (Ex. 3-7), Bridge's attempts at textural contrast, while understandable, are not convincing. Clashing rhythms and

**Poco adagio**

The musical score consists of four systems of staves. The first system includes Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The second system includes Violin I and Cello/Double Bass. The third system includes Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass. The fourth system includes Violin I and Cello/Double Bass. The score is in C minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Poco adagio'. The first system begins with a 'p dolce' marking. The second system has a 'p' marking. The third system has a 'p' marking and a motif 'a' indicated by a dashed line. The fourth system has a 'p' marking.

Ex. 3-6a: Piano Quartet in C minor, third movement, bars 1 - 4  
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timbral effects (Ex. 3-8) lack the security of Bridge's otherwise idiomatic string writing and the sense of purpose found in the textures of his later chamber music (compare, for instance, the less orthodox passages of the Third and Fourth Quartets and Trio Rhapsody). While the passage provides contrast, it sounds chaotic, suggesting that

The musical score for Ex. 3-6b consists of two systems of four staves each. The key signature is C minor (three sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The top system includes Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass. The bottom system includes Viola and Cello/Double Bass. Dynamics are marked as *pp* (pianissimo) in several places. There are accents marked with a dashed line and 'c' above the notes in the first and third measures of the top system, and a dashed line and 'b' below the notes in the second measure of the bottom system.

Ex. 3-6b: Piano Quartet in C minor, third movement, bars 12 - 15

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The musical score for Ex. 3-7 is in C minor (three sharps) and 3/4 time, with the tempo/mood marked 'Sostenuto e marcato'. It consists of two systems of four staves each: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The top system shows the Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass parts, with dynamics marked as *sf* (sforzando). The bottom system shows the Viola and Cello/Double Bass parts, with dynamics marked as *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). There are triplets and accents in the bottom system.

Ex. 3-7: Piano Quartet in C minor, third movement, bars 45 - 48

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Ex. 3-8: Piano Quartet in C minor, third movement, bars 58 - 59

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Bridge was not entirely comfortable with the combination of instruments. This impression is reinforced in the finale, which regularly falls back on unison string passages supported by flowing piano arpeggios or pitted against piano octaves. Texturally, the Piano Quartet presents Bridge with problems not encountered in the works for strings alone, which consistently evince a confident and expert handling of instrumental writing (compare, for instance, the textural disruption in a similar position in the slow movement of the B flat String Quartet). A further illuminating comparison is with the Phantasy Piano Quartet of 1910, in which the variety of textural combinations seems effortless.

As in the earlier chamber works, the second A section commences in a remote key, in this case F major. Unfortunately, the relationship of this key to the original tonic, and to the C sharp minor of the central section, does not create the kind of logical progression achieved in the earlier slow movements. This is exacerbated by the abrupt progressions leading to and from the remote key, resulting in a lack of tonal integration. This procedure does, however, look ahead to Bridge's later use of harmonic 'blocks' to create tonal relationships in works such as the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet. The choice of E major as the key of the third movement may itself be an indication of this process, referring back to E major episodes in the previous movement, while F major relates more clearly to the keys of the surrounding movements.

In the fourth movement Bridge presents another compromise between traditional sonata form and sonata-arch, and a substantial coda recalls first movement material. The first subject eschews the usual ternary arrangement, with motifs from a short introductory gesture and two initial themes (Ex. 3-9) being developed freely. There are

**Presto**

Ex. 3-9a: Piano Quartet in C minor, fourth movement, bars 1 - 5

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Ex. 3-9b: Piano Quartet in C minor, fourth movement, bars 9 - 12

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Ex. 3-9c: Piano Quartet in C minor, fourth movement, bars 19 - 20  
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Ex. 3-10: Piano Quartet in C minor, fourth movement, bars 70 - 76  
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some similarities here with later finales whose principal subject areas use two distinct themes. A transition recalling the triplets of the opening leads to the characteristically lyrical second subject in E flat major (Ex. 3-10), which, like the first, is more diffuse than usual: two statements of the theme with different continuations are followed by a contrasting section and a climactic final statement of the theme.

A triumphant closing section leads to the development, where first subject derivations gather intensity, leading to textures that sound laboured compared to Bridge's writing for strings alone and include copious scale passages (culminating in Ex. 3-11). References to the second subject appear towards the end of the development but are quickly interrupted by material from the first movement, leading to the recapitulation. In a procedure similar to that noted in the first movement, the tonic chord is avoided, although the material is recapitulated exactly as it occurs in the exposition (starting with the second thematic idea, given in Ex. 3-9c). In this way, Bridge achieves

Ex. 3-11: Piano Quartet in C minor, fourth movement, bars 222 - 227



yet another 'hybrid' sonata-arch, beginning the recapitulation with first subject material, but ultimately delaying tonal resolution until the second subject (in the tonic major) and the subsequent return to the tonic minor. Interestingly, the transition to and return of the tonic minor revert to material from the first movement, with only slight references to finale material. The transferral of resolution to first movement material is a considerable advance on Bridge's earlier instances of cyclic unity and points towards later experiments with this procedure, most notably the Cello Sonata.

The Piano Quartet thus looks ahead to several significant features of subsequent works, as Bridge searched for solutions to the problems posed by technical issues and the pursuit of a personal style. Understandably, Bridge's attempts at originality create as many problems as they solve, and the Piano Quartet is both the most personal and least satisfying of the surviving student works. The opposite applies to the B flat String Quartet. The search for a more personal style, capable of solving the technical problems encountered in the student works, is a prominent factor in the music of the next few years. An initial preference for smaller forms and the avoidance of development sections suggest that Bridge was aware of his predicament. Indeed, to a composer of his technical proficiency (of which he was rightly proud), such problems must have been distressing. A renewed attempt at combining piano and strings in the Piano Quintet of 1905 was again deemed insufficient, and was revised in 1912.

In the years following his time at the RCM, the dual concerns of finding a relevant musical language and appropriate forms were foremost in Bridge's mind. His professional career as a member of several string quartets was matched by his continued preoccupation with chamber music, while his gradually increasing interest in conducting was mirrored by the growing proportion of orchestral works in his output. The stylistic and formal experiments observed in the C minor Piano Quartet are continued in the works that followed and are further enriched by influences such as Debussy and the impetus provided by the Cobbett competitions.

## 2 – Early Works, 1903-1906

Bridge's first major composition after completing his studies with Stanford was the *Symphonic Poem*, his first large-scale orchestral work, completed in October 1903. His next attempt at a substantial chamber work came the following year, but was not finished: the Violin Sonata in E flat is one of only a handful of aborted works whose manuscripts survive. Like the *Symphonic Poem*, the Violin Sonata is somewhat stylistically unfocussed, but already at this early stage a clear difference in approach between orchestral and chamber music can be detected. This is evident throughout Bridge's output, his chamber music tending to engender what might be described as a more severe style than his orchestral or piano music. Margaret Notley has explored the perceived differences in styles appropriate to chamber and orchestral genres in *fin de siècle* Vienna and its relation to the music of Brahms and Bruckner. As already noted, Brahms's death was still a recent event when Bridge began his studies with Stanford, and contemporary attitudes to genre would certainly have informed his own approach.

The genres seem to have been differentiated by the direct (melodic/gestural) appeal of orchestral music compared to the intellectual rigour (i.e. 'logic') of chamber music – summarised by Notley as 'inspired invention' versus 'rational elaboration'.<sup>1</sup> The latter was particularly associated with Brahms, whose 'logical' technical procedures such as developing variation were felt to make his music less accessible. Thus the musical purity of chamber music was portrayed as being conservative and elitist compared to the more 'expressive' orchestral and operatic forms, which, in the Wagnerian view, communicated more directly and naturally to the public. Wagner criticised the use (in symphonic music) of 'a style of unpliant and fragmented melodic writing ("paltry melodies like chopped straw") more suitable for "so-called 'chamber music' "', noting that 'when Beethoven composed symphonies "he believed he had to speak in large, vivid strokes to the people, to all mankind, in the spacious hall."'<sup>2</sup>

In Bridge's music there is a recurring contrast between 'pure' chamber music, its serious style and abstract self-sufficiency, and the more accessible and programmatic orchestral works, reinforcing a sense of the chamber music's status as 'private utterance'; there is a sense that, in his orchestral music, Bridge is writing with an

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<sup>1</sup> Margaret Notley, 'Brahms as Liberal: Genre, Style, and Politics in Late Nineteenth-Century Vienna', *19th Century Music*, XVII/2 (Fall 1993), 108.

<sup>2</sup> Notley, 'Brahms as Liberal', 117, quoting Wagner's 'Über die Anwendung der Musik auf das Drama'.

audience in mind (an impression strengthened by the style of late works such as *Enter Spring* and *Rebus*), while in much of the chamber music he is exploring his own technical and aesthetic interests. This includes his choice of forms, where the 'prestigious' chamber music forms such as string quartet and piano trio contrast with the almost exclusive output of programmatic music such as symphonic poems in the orchestral oeuvre (he never attempted a conventional symphony or concerto).<sup>3</sup> As a result, the chamber works of the tonal period seem conservative alongside the more colourful and impressionistic orchestral music, while after 1920 the opposite is the case – if the mature orchestral works attempt to explore modernist tendencies in forms palatable to the musical public, the chamber music attempts no such concessions, allowing Bridge to explore the full implications of his stylistic development. The resulting divergence of style curiously reflects its ideological origins – where the chamber music seems 'cosmopolitan' in its striving for technical sophistication, the orchestral music tends to be more obviously 'English', befitting the audience it was intended for (in other words, 'speaking to the people').

Bridge's approaches to chamber and orchestral music perhaps also relate to his own early experiences of the genres, playing publicly in his father's orchestra and playing chamber music in the family circle. Given Bridge's obvious affection for chamber music, as composer and performer, it seems reasonable to suggest that these familial musical activities were remembered fondly, as well as being an active introduction to the music of the masters. The music played by his father's orchestra, meanwhile, would have consisted of lighter fare. Perhaps the resulting duality of styles contributed to the image of Bridge as a 'superficial', technically facile composer; and, indeed, writing effectively for both chamber groups and orchestra was clearly a more important concern than immediately exploring and asserting a personal and profoundly original voice throughout his output.<sup>4</sup> In Bridge's more mature music, originality of style combines with modernist influences, leading to a perpetuation of the idea that technical facility hindered the development of a more expressive idiom (many contemporary critics holding Bridge's type of modernism to be inherently inexpressive); the possibility that

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<sup>3</sup> John Ireland is similar in his approach to genres, favouring the symphonic poem model in his orchestral music. Hurlstone's orchestral music, by contrast (with its sets of variations and the Piano Concerto), suggests a more uniformly conservative (Brahmsian) influence.

<sup>4</sup> Payne notes this criticism of Bridge's facility (*Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, 18); examples include Herbert Antcliffe's 'The Recent Rise of Chamber Music in England' (*The Musical Quarterly* 6/1, January 1920) and the Daily Telegraph review of a Proms performance of *Enter Spring* ('Promenade Concerts: Bax's Third Symphony', 26 September 1930).

the realisation of his technical potential was a process of profound self-discovery was generally ignored.

The *Symphonic Poem* suggests a number of new influences (Hindmarsh notes that Bridge was now 'no longer under Stanford's watchful eye'),<sup>5</sup> most notably Tchaikovsky, Wagner and Liszt.<sup>6</sup> It is a substantial work, one of Bridge's most ambitious single-movement structures, matched in length only by the much later *Phantasm* and *Oration*. Its programme is indicated by a prefatory inscription (which was reproduced in the programme note at the first performance), and there are many atmospheric devices, some bordering on the operatic, for instance the short transition section leading to the central *Andante* (Ex. 4-1). The influence of Wagner on Bridge's music more generally, after the conservatism of the RCM works, can be felt in the increased fluidity of melodic structures and harmony (for instance in the *Idylls*), coinciding with a growing awareness of Debussy. The form of the *Symphonic Poem* is uncomplicated, and bears some resemblance to the later phantasy-arch forms, as a sonata exposition and recapitulation conceived on broad lines flank an independent central *andante* section. The handling of the large canvass is convincing, although transitions tend to be rather abrupt. The economy of material is impressive, however, with Bridge's technique of counterstatement with varied continuation (rather than developing variation) in evidence throughout. The recapitulation is considerably varied, with the characteristic curtailment of the first subject and excision of the transition, but there is no sense of transformation. The essentially monothematic central *Andante* is also typical, as is the exhaustive use of principal motivic material in the outer parts, particularly that pervading the introduction (and hence the coda) and first subject.

The Phantasie String Quartet is Bridge's first work produced for a competition held by Walter Willson Cobbett, a wealthy businessman who 'devoted to commerce the little time he could spare from music'.<sup>7</sup> A passionate chamber music enthusiast, he established a series of chamber music competitions and wrote a *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music* (1930), as well as commissioning works by various composers. In doing so he encouraged generations of British composers to write chamber music. A significant aspect of his influence was the development of the single-movement

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Hindmarsh, sleeve note to CHAN 9950 ('Bridge Orchestral Music Vol. 1').

<sup>6</sup> Gareth J. Thomas notes the growing popularity of Tchaikovsky's music during the 1890s (Thomas, 'The Impact of Russian Music in England 1893-1929'). Public enthusiasm, particularly for his orchestral works, reached a peak during Bridge's years at the RCM.

<sup>7</sup> Grove 5, quoted in 'Walter Willson Cobbett', New Grove Online, accessed January 2010.

Ex. 4-1: *Symphonic Poem*, bars 338 - 350

'phantasy' form in chamber music, the form stipulated for the entries for the first two (and several later) competitions. Cobbett's aims in encouraging this form of composition were twofold: firstly, to attempt to establish a modern equivalent to a venerable English instrumental form, the Tudor viol fantasia; and secondly, to encourage the development of a serious and substantial single-movement form of medium length in chamber music more generally (perhaps analogous to the overture or tone poem in orchestral music), citing analogies from literature, comparing 'the lyric and the epic poem, the short story and the novel'.<sup>8</sup> The influence of Bridge's

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Hindmarsh, *Catalogue*, 35. While his principal aim was to promote chamber music, his endeavours also tie in with the early music movement and nationalistic trends.

engagement with phantasy form on his development is significant, and some of the technical and aesthetic implications of the form (and its handling by Bridge) will be discussed below.

The *Novelletten* and *Idylls* are collections of short pieces, and have been described as 'salon pieces', with some justification.<sup>9</sup> As sets they are, however, substantial and interesting enough to merit a place in this survey, and they explore elements of form and style of significance to later developments. The shorter spans also allow Bridge to experiment with expressive structures that would be difficult to apply to larger works, resulting in explorations of expressive types unique in Bridge's output. The first movements of both sets and the second *Idyll* (which served Britten as the basis for his *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*) are particularly fine. Bridge's later description of the *Idylls* as 'trifles' belies the affection he appears to have retained for them, and the depth of feeling, meticulous craftsmanship and dedication to his future wife suggest that they were taken seriously.<sup>10</sup>

\* \* \*

## Violin Sonata in E flat major

(i) *Allegro*

(ii) *Andante con espressione*

Bridge's first attempt at a major chamber work after completing his studies at the RCM sees him retain several characteristics of the student works while striking out in new stylistic directions. The heroically romantic tone of the first movement is unprecedented, although the dissimilarity with subsequent works suggests that Bridge soon favoured other directions, perhaps explaining why he left the work unfinished. Maybe the heroic 'soloist as protagonist' dynamic created friction with Bridge's abstract conception of chamber music. Only one movement was completed (it was not performed at the time) and has been edited for publication by Paul Hindmarsh. The

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<sup>9</sup> For instance by Payne, *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, 18.

<sup>10</sup> Letter to Fass, 20 May 1922.

work's major key is perhaps significant, being Bridge's only attempt at a major-key chamber work between the early B flat String Quartet and the String Sextet (completed in 1912). He soon realised that the minor key was more appropriate to his expressive aims, exemplified by the brief dramatic outbursts followed by restrained melancholy that open the Phantasy Piano Trio and Phantasy Piano Quartet. In the Violin Sonata, a Straussian heroic tone (the character of the opening of Strauss's own Violin Sonata is comparable), perhaps informed by Wagner-influenced French composers such as Franck, combines with an easy lyricism occasionally reminiscent of Bridge's 'salon' pieces, making for a thoroughly romantic work.

There are interesting parallels with both of the later sonatas for solo instrument with piano: the consistently melodic conception and treatment of themes (particularly the alternation between instruments) point towards the Cello Sonata, while the opening (Ex. 4-2) bears a striking resemblance to that of the mature Violin Sonata of 1932 (Ex. 4-3), even if the language and its effect are entirely different. A second first-subject theme outlines a similarly uncharacteristic upwards-surge (Ex. 4-4) – Bridge often favours descending principal themes, while ascending themes tend to be subdued, for instance the opening themes of the revised Piano Quintet and Cello Sonata, and the main theme of the Phantasy Piano Quartet.

The second theme of the first subject leads to chromatic harmony featuring a number of elements that Bridge was to explore further in subsequent works (Ex. 4-5). The use of sequence is already an established feature of Bridge's music, while the possibilities for harmonic diversion presented by chords such as augmented chords, half diminished sevenths (whether they are treated as such or as incomplete major ninths) and augmented sixth chords were soon to be more fully appreciated. The use of

The image shows the first three bars of the Violin Sonata in E flat, first movement. The music is in 3/4 time and E-flat major. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' and the mood is 'con passione'. The violin part begins with a melodic line, and the piano accompaniment provides harmonic support. The piano part includes the instruction 'con pedale'.

Ex. 4-2: Violin Sonata in E flat, first movement, bars 1 - 3

**Allegro energico**

Ex. 4-3: Violin Sonata, first movement, bars 1-2

**a Tempo**

Ex. 4-4: Violin Sonata in E flat, first movement, piano, bars 8 - 10

Ex. 4-5: Violin Sonata in E flat, first movement, harmony, bars 22 - 29

diminished seventh chords, meanwhile, was to become increasingly rare, and the blatantly late-romantic series of alternating diminished seventh chords at the end of the development section (Ex. 4-6) is unique in Bridge's music.

The transition section is reminiscent of the second subject of the Franck Piano Quintet (Ex. 4-7), which Bridge had played the previous year, while the second subject (Ex. 4-8) owes more to the pastoral *naïveté* of Dvořák. The development is relatively concise, using transition and then first subject material, before linking to the recapitulation as shown in Ex. 4-6. This brevity foreshadows the concise development sections of later works, such as the Phantasie String Quartet and finale of the First



String Quartet. In the recapitulation the heroic tone of the first subject is reinforced by the bravura passages and repetitions of the opening motif that close the movement. The second subject is approached in a manner already observed in the finale of the E minor String Quintet; initially recapitulated in C major, the harmonic movement of the first part of the theme, originally towards D $\flat$  major, now leads naturally back to the tonic (i.e. C to E $\flat$  instead of B $\flat$  to D $\flat$ ). While some of the concerns already noted about this procedure may also apply here, they are less relevant in a major-key movement, aided here by the ingenious construction of the theme.

The musical score consists of three systems. Each system features a violin part on the top staff and a piano accompaniment on the bottom two staves. The key signature is E-flat major (three flats). The first system shows the beginning of the first subject with a dynamic marking of 'p'. The second system continues the first subject with a dynamic marking of 'pp'. The third system shows the end of the first subject with a dynamic marking of 'pp'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 4-6: Violin Sonata in E flat, first movement, bars 167 - 175

*cresc.*

*cresc.*

*p*

Ex. 4-7a:  
Violin Sonata in E flat,  
first movement,  
bars 38 - 44

*p* *tenero ma con passione*

*p* *strings*

*piu f*

Ex. 4-7b: Franck, Piano Quintet in F minor,  
first movement, bars 90 - 94

A Tempo

Ex. 4-8: Violin Sonata in E flat, first movement, bars 62 - 65

The second movement, presumably the central movement of a three-movement plan, was left unfinished by Bridge. The existing material (111 bars) is fascinating, however, being the first inner movement in Bridge's output to combine slow movement and scherzo, a procedure used by Brahms in his First String Quintet and Second Violin Sonata. The combination of slow movement and scherzo is next explored in the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet (which are special cases, consisting of large single-movement structures), and later in the revised Piano Quintet, String Sextet and Cello Sonata. It is difficult to evaluate the existing material, as it does not represent a finished work that Bridge was willing to publish (the same goes for the first movement, although that was at least completed). The key-relationship between the slow section and the scherzo is unusual, moving from B major to B $\flat$  major, although the simple progression between keys, reinterpreting the dominant chord as a German sixth, exemplifies Bridge's growing interest in what was to become one of his favourite harmonic devices.

\* \* \*

## Novelletten

### I (*Andante moderato*)

The *Novelletten* are Bridge's first substantial set of individual pieces for string quartet, completed in the same year (1904) as the humorous and much shorter *Three Pieces* (written for an informal RCM concert) and the unfinished Violin Sonata. As with several later comparable sets for piano solo or chamber combinations, Bridge presents

material that is superficially charming and elegant in style while incorporating progressive elements, providing opportunities for formal or harmonic experimentation on a small scale.

The opening of the first *Novellette*, for instance, after the introduction of the principal melodic motif *x* (Ex. 5-1 shows the later complete version of the principal theme), has a number of interesting harmonic features indicative of subsequent developments. After the introduction of a  $G\flat$  major chord in bar 9, for instance, the imaginative handling of the  $B\flat$  pedal note in the first violin part, combined with multiple appoggiaturas, results in the notes  $D\flat$ ,  $C$ ,  $C\flat$  and  $B\flat$  being sounded together over a  $G\flat$  bass (bar 12, Ex. 5-2). The eventual  $G\flat$  major chord (bar 13) moves via a  $C$  dominant ninth to a *fortissimo*  $B\flat$  major (second inversion), and back to a  $G\flat$  chord, this time in first inversion. The recurring  $B\flat$  which links these chords is then reinterpreted as a dominant pedal by the abrupt introduction of a  $B\flat$  dominant seventh chord, but with the flattened fifth degree in the bass (resulting in a combination of notes identical with an augmented [French] sixth chord). That chord and its functions are a source not only of tension and ambiguity, but also of tonal propulsion in Bridge's later harmonic language, combining elements of dominant and augmented sixth harmonic identity, while also being a whole-tone sonority. The use of such formations interchangeably as dominants or augmented sixths (leading either to the implied dominant note or chord, or indeed directly to the implied tonic) encourages ambiguity and fluidity of harmony. I will examine in detail Bridge's complex application of such procedures in the first of the *Three Idylls* and the revised version of the Piano Quintet.

Ex. 5-1: Novelletten, No. 1, bars 19 - 22

Ex. 5-2:  
Novelletten, No. 1,  
bars 12 - 18

After this unstable introduction, the first tonic chord accompanies the first full statement of the principal theme (Ex. 5-1). After two four-bar phrases, the second tending towards G minor, texture and harmony are varied by a characteristic sequential phrase (Ex. 5-3). The integration of harmonic colour into a more coherent overall progression during this passage is a distinct advance on comparably abrupt harmonic movement in the student works; the sequence allows Bridge to move into and out of the new material by a harmonic shift to the flat side of the ostensible local tonic. The next segment reflects the sequential material, when a B $\flat$  minor chord again leads to a dominant seventh chord on A, this time resolving emphatically to a *forte* D major chord, which moves first to D $\flat$  major, then to C major (tuplet motif, Ex. 5-4). As noted by Payne, this ‘little punctuating figure’ is also connected to the introduction, using the dominant chords of its prominent key areas G minor and G $\flat$  major.<sup>11</sup> Bridge’s skill in contextualising such abrupt harmonic motion differs sharply from the attractive but less carefully integrated harmony that typifies the more colourful parts of the student works.

<sup>11</sup> Payne, *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, 19.

Ex. 5-3: Novelletten, No. 1, bars 27 - 31

Ex. 5-4: Novelletten, No. 1, bars 33 - 37

The progression produced by the reintroduction of the principal theme in  $E_b$  (with a dominant pedal similar to that featured in the introduction, now in the cello part, and again combined with a prominent melodic  $B_b$ ) is reminiscent of the C major –  $B_b$  major progression at the end of the introduction, shortly before the  $B_b$  is confirmed as the dominant. Now it functions emphatically as such, although there is also a brief reference to  $B_b$  minor, which initiated the harmonic fluctuations after the first full statement of the theme – a further example of Bridge's integration of harmonic colour into a structural frame of reference. The intricacy of these elements, explored on a small scale, is reminiscent of the inner movements of the student works.

A new theme (Ex. 5-5a) is introduced, *forte con passione*, by the cello, opening a new section (the B section of a ternary form) apparently in G minor, though with frequent chromaticism. A phrase loosely derived from the previous material (Ex. 5-5b) provides contrast before an impassioned *fortissimo* statement of the original version,

combining Bridge's favoured ternary organisation of material within sections with his preference for monothematic B sections. After a further increase of dynamic level and a final *fortissimo* statement of the theme over a D pedal, the 'tuplet' motif closes the central section (Ex. 5-6); it is approached in a manner similar to its first appearance, and the subsequent harmonic movement is again abrupt.

a) *f con passione* *ff*

b) *pp dolce*

Ex. 5-5: Novelletten, No. 1, (a) cello, bars 45 - 48; (b) cello, bars 55 - 56

Marcato

*ff*

Ex. 5-6: Novelletten, No. 1, bars 68 - 72

The progression is made palatable through the chromatic movement of the outer parts in contrary motion, and again makes reference to previous progressions, in the introduction and original appearance of the tuplet motif. The descending motion from G to E (marked in Ex. 5-6, with some interjections of D and D $\flat$ ) is completed by implication as the tonic, E $\flat$ , returns with the principal theme. The ambiguous triple-*forte* chord (a B dominant ninth chord over its implied tonic note, E) represents the culmination of the tension accrued during the B section, while the chromatic descending approach to the tonic refers back to the F $\flat$ -E $\flat$  approach to the first full statement of the

theme. The level of tension thus achieved, and the effect created by this range of references, are unprecedented in Bridge's earlier music, as is the painstakingly complex process of preparation that makes it intelligible. The principal theme returns in varied form, and the conclusion of the movement is modelled on the introduction.

The gentle lyricism of the main theme after the somewhat hazy introduction represents a construct of peace and stability found in a number of forms in Bridge's music, for instance in slow movements of larger works and second subjects of sonata movements. There they often provide contrast to the turbulent surroundings – only the String Sextet (also in E flat) attempts a more substantial treatment of this expressive type in a primary role. In the first *Novellette*, the calm stability of the theme is challenged in two ways: superficially, by the increased drama of the B section theme, but more fundamentally by the tuplet theme. Not only is this unstable in its turns of harmony and wild exuberance, but in its relationship to the meanderings of the introduction it represents a more violent and unpredictable alternative to the stable theme (which is also rooted in the introduction). It is precisely this kinship that is unsettling, revealing a potential for violent loss of control within the serenity of the opening; the combination of both types of instability at the conclusion of the B section is highly effective – the movement would be infinitely less satisfying without the tuplet gesture. Meditations on the relationship between (apparently) stable pastoral material and intimations of harsher alternatives occupy Bridge throughout much of the remainder of his chamber music.

## II (*Presto*)

A short scherzo, the second *Novellette* lacks the harmonic subtlety of the first, but is an interesting anomaly in Bridge's early music in terms of its thematic structure. Both the scherzo and the B section are largely monothematic; what is unusual is the rapidity with which they are interchanged, the brevity of the sections and the resultant form.

A short pizzicato introduction featuring diminished seventh chords leads to the main scherzo motif in G minor (Ex. 5-7). After sixteen bars dominated by this material the pizzicato gesture returns, leading to the first B section in A major (Ex. 5-8). Twelve bars of scherzo theme (again in G minor, [5]) follow, moving directly to a further appearance of the B theme ([6], half the length of the previous version at only ten bars). This second B section is in G major, although a cadence onto G major is avoided. A



final version of the scherzo theme, now in  $\frac{6}{8}$ , follows, and the movement is concluded by the pizzicato motif, ending on the tonic major. The result is a miniature sonata-rondo, where the pizzicato motif acts, by turns, as introduction, transition and coda. The form is strengthened by the presence of only two perfect cadences, leading into the two B sections. It is Bridge's only *scherzando* movement in this form, and while the effect is whimsical, it seems fragmented and lacks the subtlety of, for instance, the first *Novellette* and the *Idylls*. The character of the overtly consolatory B theme here assumes the role alluded to above, as a temporary reprieve from the surrounding material; significantly, the resolution its harmonic ('sonata-rondo') treatment achieves is rendered largely meaningless by the chromatic concluding gesture. Perhaps this empty victory is precisely the point of the *scherzo*/joke.

Presto M.M.  $\text{♩} = 152$  Allegretto M.M.  $\text{♩} = 76$

The musical score for Ex. 5-7 consists of four staves. The first section, marked 'Presto M.M. ♩ = 152', shows a rhythmic motif in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The motif is played pizzicato, alternating between piano (p) and forte (f) dynamics. The second section, marked 'Allegretto M.M. ♩ = 76', is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp. It features a chromatic descending line in the upper staves, marked arco and lunga, with dynamics ranging from pianissimo (pp) to mezzo-forte (mf). The lower staves continue the pizzicato motif from the first section.

Ex. 5-7: Novelletten, No. 2, bars 1 - 6

Moderato M.M.  $\text{♩} = 104$

The musical score for Ex. 5-8 consists of four staves. It is marked 'Moderato M.M. ♩ = 104' and is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp. The music is characterized by long, flowing lines in the upper staves, marked 'mf dolce'. The lower staves provide harmonic support with sustained notes and chords.

Ex. 5-8: Novelletten, No. 2, bars 25 - 27

The conclusion notwithstanding, the harmonic tensions of the movement are defined by the keys of the trio sections and the diminished seventh chords found at the end of most other sections. While these create a coherent network of references, the result is less convincing than in the previous movement. The short-winded thematic distribution, meanwhile, does not contribute to a sense of purpose, and although this may well be deliberate, it is a formula to which Bridge did not return. It does however signal his willingness to experiment harmonically and structurally at this juncture, and these experiments led quickly to increasing levels of stylistic maturity and technical security in the works of the next few years.

### III (*Allegro vivo*)

The third *Novellette* is a short sonata form movement in E $\flat$  that, like the outer sections of the subsequent Phantasie String Quartet and the third *Idyll*, experiments with sonata-arch and sonata-rondo. The first subject is presented in Bridge's favourite ternary arrangement, with an exuberant *fortissimo* theme leading to a more varied second idea (Ex. 5-9). This is itself divided into two distinct parts, the second of which uses motifs from both the first theme and the first part of the second theme (*a* and *b*). In its dramatic tone, harmonic variety, and provenance, its role is perhaps equivalent to the triplet motif in the first *Novellette*; for a number of reasons, however, its effect is less striking. Typically, a short, emphatic statement of the first theme follows, leading into a thematically-related transition.

Allegro vivo M.M.  $\text{♩} = 92$

The musical score consists of four staves, each beginning with a *ff* dynamic marking. The notation includes eighth notes, dotted eighth notes, and various chordal textures. There are several accents and dynamic markings throughout the passage.

Ex. 5-9a: *Novelletten*, No. 3, bars 1 - 4

Ex. 5-9b:Novelletten, No. 3, bars 13 - 14 & 20 - 21

The second subject (Ex. 5-10), in B $\flat$ , is relatively short and soon leads to a similarly brief central section in two distinct parts: the first based on a motif derived from the opening notes of the second subject, the second recalling the second movement (Ex. 5-11). An unorthodox D major to F minor progression (9) introduces the return of first subject (second theme) material, recalling a similar progression from the exposition, albeit with a two-bar elision. After only seven bars, however, a progression seemingly mirroring that just described leads to the second subject, now in the tonic. This is slightly extended and leads, after a four-bar reference to material from the first *Novellette*, to statements of the first subject first theme (14), also featuring a short reference to the second subject. In its placement after the central section, the ‘disruptive’ theme again approximates the triplet motif of the first movement, although its structural integration and expressive force cannot compare with the earlier *Novellette*.

Ex. 5-10:Novelletten, No. 3, bars 40 - 43



Ex. 5-11a:Novelletten, No. 3, violin, bar 60



Ex. 5-11b:Novelletten, No. 3, bar 76

The mingling of subjects results in another compromise between traditional sonata form and sonata-arch, not unlike that found in the finale of the C minor Piano Quartet. First subject material is recapitulated first, in its original key, but avoiding the tonic chord, making it structurally ambiguous. While the exact repetition of material suggests a recapitulation, the withholding of tonic harmony (and principal first theme material) prevents the sense of 'arrival' usually associated with the beginning of the recapitulation, prolonging the harmonic fluidity of the development. The sonata-arch element also allows Bridge to experiment with the placement of themes, including references to previous movements. These strengthen the identity of the *Novelletten* as a coherent set, drawing on experiments with cyclic unity in the student works, notably the Piano Quartet. A parallel interpretation, in terms of sonata-rondo, is also possible; the non-developmental character of the central section (in thematic content and its treatment) supports this interpretation. The resulting form is one of considerable subtlety, although the abrupt alternation between emphatically contrasted themes on such a limited scale weakens its effect somewhat. Mediation between principal areas of essentially stable character (i.e. the virile first subject and lyrical second) is but rarely encountered in Bridge's later music.

## Phantasie String Quartet<sup>12</sup>

In 1905, Cobbett held his first chamber music competition, requesting entries which could 'be performed without a break, ... consist[ing] of sections varying in tempo and rhythm'.<sup>13</sup> Bridge's first response to this idea is less successful than later attempts, but nevertheless contains some interesting points.

The Phantasie String Quartet is unique in Bridge's output in the use of an ABC form (with two short interruptions by A material during the C section), resulting in a sort of compromise between Bridge's earlier multi-movement works and his subsequent arch-forms. In the three sections, Bridge constructs relatively autonomous miniature movements, the outer sections suggesting independent sonata procedures, the inner section ternary form. The outer parts themselves use short sonata-arches, representing a further step in Bridge's exploration of this scheme. During the first (A) part of the Phantasie String Quartet the central section is clearly developmental, with references to both subjects, precluding an analysis as sonata-rondo; in the third part the corresponding section is a derivation of the first subject, which could arguably form the centre of a sonata-rondo, although harmonic and motivic treatment are clearly developmental. In the miniature proportions of the Quartet, with its clear structural divisions and simple harmonic structures, Bridge avoids the problems of meandering development and weak recapitulation that occasionally mar the earlier chamber music.

The opening *Allegro moderato* section begins with a march-like  $\frac{6}{8}$  first subject in F minor. A typical *fortissimo* unison statement of the theme (Ex. 6-1) leads to several counterstatements, producing a motivically unified first subject. Harmony is diverted, as so often, by sequential writing, and a short chromatic transition leads to a flowing second subject (Ex. 6-2). The single-minded thematic and textural uniformity of the subjects emphasises the sense of contrast. The reappearance of the first subject motif

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<sup>12</sup> Bridge's use of the spelling 'phantasie' here does not seem to have any special significance; perhaps he simply assumed that this was the correct spelling. Friskin used the same spelling for his 1908 entry, and notices concerning the Cobbett competitions use this spelling erroneously as late as 1911 (see for instance *The Musical Times* 49/784, June 1908, 397 and 52/816, February 1911, 117). Cobbett himself (quoting Ernest Walker) noted the confusion over spellings in his *Cyclopaedic Survey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930), 285.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Hindmarsh, *Thematic Catalogue*, 35. Bridge's entry was awarded a special prize for 'the competitor whose work offers in the opinion of the judges the best example of an art-form suited for a short piece of chamber music for strings', William Hurlstone and Haydn Wood claiming first and second prizes – Bridge is sometimes incorrectly stated as having won second prize at this competition (including in Cobbett's *Cyclopaedic Survey*), perhaps because the special prize was equal in value to the second prize. 'Occasional notes', *Musical Times*, 46/754 (December 1905), 791.

between  $\square$  and  $\square$  signals the beginning of the development, which alternates first and second subject material while diverting the harmony towards D minor. The first subject theme is here accompanied by a quaver figure not unlike the cello part of the second subject (Ex. 6-3), suggesting an overlap of characteristics relatively unusual in Bridge's music. The disciplined, rhythmic vigour of the first subject is combined with the flowing character of the second, allowing Bridge to present thematic material largely unchanged, relying on the variety provided by the contrast in articulation. The heaviness of the texture achieves an intensity that contrasts strongly with the carefree lightness of the surrounding second subject statements.

**Allegro moderato**

Ex. 6-1: Phantasie String Quartet, bars 1 - 6

Ex. 6-2: Phantasie String Quartet, bars 61 - 68

Ex. 6-3: Phantasie String Quartet, cello, bar 115

The return of the second subject (G) is not afforded dominant preparation, a half diminished seventh chord on G resolving into the new tonic (F major), again making the arrival of the recapitulation less conspicuous. As a result, the ultimate return of the first subject theme (H) achieves a particular sense of 'arrival' and hence resolution (see 'A Note on Arch Forms' in chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion of Bridge's manipulation of the traditional dynamics of sonata form); its grim tone makes for a satisfying contrast with the ensuing B and C sections. The use of a march style in the first section is significant, suggesting that Bridge was still striving for 'strong' and 'stable' first subject types in the minor key, as in the minor-key student works. The use of stylistic tropes referring to dance or marching is relatively unusual in the chamber music, but has some similarity to the application of such elements in the orchestral music, representing a convenient stylistic and expressive stability. The effect of such procedures becomes especially significant in the later orchestral music.

The new key of the *Andante moderato* section (D major) is again not prepared, but rather introduced abruptly along with changes of metre, tempo and thematic material. Bridge builds a characteristically asymmetrical parallel period as his first theme (Ex. 6-4), with slightly different versions framing a remarkable middle section. This consists almost entirely of major-minor-seventh (i.e. 'dominant') chords, mainly in second inversion, supporting a single thematic idea (Ex. 6-5). Progressions between these chords are not functional, with most moving by whole tone, including one series outlining a full octave (M-N), leading to the F# dominant that precedes the return of D major and the first theme. These series of dominant chords reflect the expansion of his tonal language and exploration of non-functional elements, and comparable passages can be found in later works such as the third *Idyll* and the finale of the revised Piano Quintet. Through such treatment the dominant chord becomes a quasi-thematic element as its tonal function is obscured, allowing abrupt and colourful progressions between implied tonal areas. In the *Phantasie String Quartet* the harmonic remoteness this creates is emphasised by the abrupt movement between the framing key, D major, and the F# dominant that opens and concludes the second thematic area. Bridge contains this remoteness through his use of stable key areas throughout the work, and the *Andante moderato* section ends with a diatonic D major coda. While both parts have idyllic/pastoral elements, the central segment evinces a more dynamic, impressionistic vision, a duality also encountered in the *Idylls*.

Andante moderato

4ta corda

*p*

4ta corda

This system contains the first four staves of music for bars 253-262. The top two staves are for the Violin I and II parts, and the bottom two are for the Viola and Cello parts. The music is in G major and 4/4 time. The first staff has a dynamic marking of *p* and a '4ta corda' instruction. The second staff also has a *p* marking and a '4ta corda' instruction with a dashed line above it. The third and fourth staves also have *p* markings.

3a corda

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

This system contains the next four staves of music for bars 253-262. The top two staves are for the Violin I and II parts, and the bottom two are for the Viola and Cello parts. The music continues from the previous system. The first staff has a dynamic marking of *pp* and a '3a corda' instruction. The second staff has a *pp* marking. The third and fourth staves also have *pp* markings.

Ex. 6-4: Phantasie String Quartet, bars 253 - 262

Poco più mosso

*p*

*p*

*p*

*pizz.*

*b2.*

This system contains four staves of music for bars 271-274. The top two staves are for the Violin I and II parts, and the bottom two are for the Viola and Cello parts. The music is in G major and 4/4 time. The first staff has a dynamic marking of *p* and a 'Poco più mosso' instruction. The second staff has a *p* marking. The third staff has a *p* marking. The fourth staff has a *pizz.* marking and a *b2.* instruction.

Ex. 6-5: Phantasie String Quartet, bars 271 - 274

Preparation for the key of the final *Allegro ma non troppo* section (F major) is minimal, effected simply through the cancellation of C# and F# in the last four bars of the preceding coda. The new tonic is approached obliquely, moving from D minor to a



dominant ninth chord, followed by the principal theme of the third section (Ex. 5-6). While the tonic is clearly established, root position F major chords are avoided entirely – the articulation of a key and the simultaneous avoidance of the tonic chord are a recurring source of tonal propulsion in Bridge’s music; this procedure is particularly striking in the first movement of the First String Quartet.

**Allegro ma non troppo**

Ex. 6-6: Phantasie String Quartet,  
bars 340 - 347

A brief sequential transition section and a single *forte* reference to the main theme of the first (*Allegro moderato*) section in C minor link smoothly to the second subject in C major (Ex. 5-7). Like the first subject, the second avoids root position tonic (i.e. C major) chords, while dominant and first inversion tonic chords establish the key. References to the relative minor are a further similarity. The development (☐) is extremely short, accruing considerable tension in its treatment of the first subject. On one level it demonstrates that Bridge was capable of developing his material effectively, but he was not yet able to apply this to a coherent large-scale form. Here, the development essentially acts as a brief division between two statements of the second

subject. The recapitulation ( $\boxed{S}$ ) is approached from E major, the progression to a dominant chord on C (Ex. 6-8b) mirroring the return of the first theme in the central *Andante moderato* (F#-D, Ex. 6-8a).

Ex. 6-7: Phantasie String Quartet, bars 377 - 380

Ex. 6-8a: Phantasie String Quartet, bars 303 - 304

Ex. 6-8b: Phantasie String Quartet, bars 414 - 416

The second subject is recapitulated in F major, and an unusually exact restatement of the first subject leads to another short reference to the main theme of the first section, this time in D minor. This key is brushed aside as a coda ( $\boxed{V}$ ) based on first subject material concludes the work, introducing the first root position F major chords since the second subject recapitulation of the first section. Bridge was to experiment further with the avoidance of emphatic tonic harmony in the First String Quartet; here it achieves a subtle sense of instability that combines with the references to the first section to gently

undermine the pleasant tone of the principal material. These references are also designed to establish F major as a sort of 'enhanced tonic', ultimately transcending the original tonic minor, and the rigidity associated with it. Here, for the first time, there is a sense that what was initially constructed as being stable has been surpassed, structurally and emotionally. Bridge was to use similar procedures to great effect in his later Phantasies, although the most profound example of this process may be found in the Second Piano Trio.

\* \* \*

### Three Idylls

The title 'Idyll' is suggestive of a recurring trope in Bridge's music, and its use in describing these three relatively short pieces for string quartet is particularly interesting. What might be described as an 'idyllic' tone is often reserved for second subjects in sonata movements, and it often assumes a pastoral colouring. These character types are closely connected, and 'the pastoral' tends to have an idyllic element anyway, typified in Bridge's music by a number of specific melodic, harmonic and textural features. While the concept 'pastoral' is usually taken to suggest picturesque rurality, in the second half of the nineteenth century this meaning broadened out to encompass a more general nostalgic idyll – Rodney Stenning Edgecombe, for instance, has discussed Dickens's ironic treatment of pastoral in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, where even London assumes a sense of pastoral idyll compared to the hellish rural 'Eden' in which Martin and his companion Mark Tapley live in America.<sup>14</sup>

The nostalgic element becomes more prominent and significant in Bridge's later music (particularly from the Cello Sonata onwards), and will be discussed in chapters 5 and 6. Musical features of the pastoral character in Bridge's music typically include sustained and regular melodic/phrase structures, major-mode diatonicism, a static or drone bass, and either lyrical melody or a more detached style reminiscent of Grieg, which might be described as 'rustic' (for instance in the third *Idyll* and the *Allegretto*

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<sup>14</sup> Rodney Stenning Edgecombe, 'The Urban Idyll in *Martin Chuzzlewit*', *The Review of English Studies*, 45/179 (Aug. 1994).

*grazioso* intermezzo of the First String Quartet). 'Idyllic' lyrical melodies are also sometimes combined with *tremolando* or similar textures, suggesting a more distant, impressionistic vision, for instance in the first *Idyll* and the second subject of the Second String Quartet's first movement; the recurring semiquaver figure in the corresponding part of the First String Quartet is also related. Interaction between different varieties of pastoral/idyllic characters becomes increasingly complex in the late works.

In the *Three Idylls*, an 'idyllic' concept is brought into relation with several other important tropes that recur in Bridge's music. Apart from the obvious pastoralism found in the middle sections of the first and second *Idylls* and much of the third (particularly reminiscent of Grieg in this instance), a distinctly elegiac mood can be observed in the A sections of the first *Idyll*, and the style of the corresponding parts of the second are perhaps related. The elegy is a recurring trope in Bridge's music, characterised by slow minor-key material using regular phrases (more obvious in the second *Idyll* than the first) and largely homophonic textures (the slow movements of the First String Quartet and *Suite for Strings*, as well as the *Lament*, also for strings, are significant examples). Material of tragic-dramatic character is conspicuously absent from these pieces (perhaps that is their idyllic quality), but it is explored in depth in Bridge's subsequent chamber works, particularly in the First String Quartet, which quickly followed the *Idylls*. There, idyllic, pastoral and elegiac elements are contrasted with the quartet's stormy principal material, vivid characterisation supporting the balance and contrast of material in Bridge's formal organisation, relating technical elements such as harmonic structure and motivic/thematic treatment to a logical and meaningful progression of expressive content. The first and second string quartets and the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet provide illuminating (and contrasting) examples.

### I (*Adagio molto espressivo*)

The opening of the first *Idyll* (Ex. 7-1) is prophetic of the revised Piano Quintet, with its melodic articulation of the tonic destabilised by chromatic supporting parts. The free use of both half diminished seventh chords and the French sixth chord in bar 6 look forward to the harmonic language of subsequent works, relating to the original version of the Piano Quintet, which had only recently been completed. An essentially monothematic passage, the A section (of a ternary form) grows out of a series of three counterstatements with varied continuations. In the first and second versions, these

differ considerably in terms of thematic material and harmony, although both are twelve bars in length. The first functional dominant chord occurs at the end of the first segment, beginning a trend of economical use of functional dominant chords in Bridge's music. The continuation of the first statement is less closely related to the principal theme than the second, while the third and final version is short and concise, resulting in a sense of increasing intensity and progressive concentration in a variation on Bridge's preferred tripartite arrangement.

**Adagio molto espressivo**

Ex. 7-1: Idylls, No. 1, bars 1 - 4

The continuation of the first statement diverts the harmony towards F# minor, through the use of sequence and augmented sixth harmony. A French sixth, ostensibly in the key of B, leads directly to an F# minor chord (Ex. 7-2), looking ahead to Bridge's creative application of French sixth/flattened-fifth dominant harmony in later works. The eventual affirmation of F# through the introduction of its leading note also initiates a renewed deflection of harmony, back to the original tonic C# minor, once again through sequential writing. The first segment thus seems somewhat unsettled, not entirely dissimilar to the opening of the first *Novellette*, although the mood and structure of this movement differ considerably.

A more harmonically stable (second) statement of the main theme ( $\square$ ) is again followed by sequential treatment, this time of the theme itself (Ex. 7-3) and a second, highly chromatic motif (Ex. 7-4) related to the cadential material that concluded the first segment (compare *a* with the cello part in the fourth bar, Ex. 7-1). The use of dominant chords reinterpreted as German sixths in the initial sequences (for instance from a G#

dominant to G major at the end of Ex. 7-3) relates directly to Bridge's reinterpretation of the French sixth observed above. The second sequential motif (Ex. 7-4) evinces a sense of increasing harmonic tension, mirroring the movement from F# minor to C# minor at the end of the first segment.

Ex. 7-2: Idylls, No. 1, bars 6 - 7

Ex. 7-3: Idylls, No. 1, bars 17 - 19

Ex. 7-4: Idylls, No. 1, bar 22

A short *fortissimo pesante* statement of the main theme (2) concludes the first part of the movement. A central (B) section in D $\flat$  major (i.e. the enharmonic tonic major) follows (Ex. 7-5), the outer parts of which are harmonically stable. Payne notes a connection between the chords in first inversion of the first phrase with those found in bars 5-6 of the main theme (Ex. 7-3).<sup>15</sup> The second phrase of the theme is unusual, consisting entirely of chromatically-moving parts over a dominant pedal, frequently resulting in diminished and augmented chords related to similar formations during the A section.

**Allegretto moderato e rubato**

Ex. 7-5: Idylls, No. 1, bars 31 - 38

A counterstatement in E major leads to the destabilisation of harmony by a motif derived from the principal theme of the first section (Ex. 7-6). A short contrasting *tremolando* section (Ex. 7-7) in F $\sharp$  minor follows. Here we have two of Bridge's most overtly pastoral types brought into immediate juxtaposition. The light, dance-like character of the main B theme is rustic yet restrained and elegant; the contrasting

<sup>15</sup> Payne, *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, 21.

section interrupts this elegance with a passionate outburst. Texture and soaring melody represent an overripe, impressionistic pastoralism that appears curiously more 'real' than the surrounding material, due to the abrupt intensity of expression. This central *tremolando* material is the genuine counterfoil to the elegiac principal theme, with the restrained tone of the principal B theme acting as a buffer between extremes. The impressionistic vision is fleeting and unstable, barely capable of presenting an idyll, before a brief return of the principal B theme leads to the second A section.



Ex. 7-6: Idylls, No. 1, cello, bars 57 - 58

Ex. 7-7: Idylls, No. 1, bars 65 - 68

The result is a simple A-BCB-A form, in which BCB is a momentary escape from the melancholy of the A sections. Neither represents a true idyll, rather approaching it obliquely – only in the last movement does Bridge attempt to construct a stable (i.e. viable and hence lasting) idyllic vision. The second A section begins with what was originally the second version of the theme, whose sequential treatment is extended to lead into an extraordinary chromatic phrase, featuring contrary motion between upper and lower parts, and resulting in some extremely dissonant pitch combinations in places (Ex. 7-8). A reorganised version of the first segment of the original A section concludes the movement, resulting in a further elaboration of the arch-shaped structure.



Ex. 7-8: Idylls, No. 1, bars 107 - 110

The effect of this arrangement is remarkable, the intensification of expression in the first A section being reversed. It is as if the process of concentration in the first part necessitated the escape of the B section (whose initial superficiality is revealed by the short-lived intensity of the *tremolando* theme), after which the elegiac main theme sinks back into confusion. The modest scale and polished technique of the movement make this extraordinary emotional progression palatable within the confines of a 'salon piece', and interestingly there is no immediately comparable equivalent in the rest of Bridge's output, suggesting once again that the shorter spans of the works discussed in this chapter provided an opportunity for experimentation not possible in more substantial works.

## II (*Allegretto poco lento*)

The harmonic adventurousness of the first *Idyll* is continued in the second, exemplified by a fluid chromaticism obscuring tonal centres for substantial spans. The form, meanwhile, is a simple ternary design characterised by consistently regular phrase lengths. The harmonic ambiguity of the opening period (Ex. 7-9)<sup>16</sup> is unprecedented in Bridge's music – the first chord seems to suggest an A minor tonality, while the following F# diminished chord does not move further towards the tonic E minor.

The first dominant chord (a dominant thirteenth) is heard in the seventh bar but deflects to a parallel dominant by descending semitone, weakening its identity. A second eight-bar period is added, an exact transposition of the first (a minor third lower)

<sup>16</sup> It is possible to analyse the second *Idyll* in four- or eight-bar phrases, resulting in minor differences in interpretation only in the B section. Taking the tempo direction's *poco lento* into account, I have opted for four-bar phrases.

apart from the final cadence, which features a characteristic use of the French sixth chord (Ex. 7-10), resolving in a similar manner to that noted in the first *Idyll*.

Unusually, Bridge approaches this from an enharmonic F dominant seventh (linking with the preceding D minor), written as a German sixth; the bass part falling from C to B modifies this to a French sixth, preparing for the dominant-tonic movement in the bass that materially stabilises the progression.

**Allegretto poco lento**

Ex. 7-9: Idylls, No. 2, bars 1 - 8

Ex. 7-10: Idylls, No. 2, bars 15 - 16

This material served Britten as the theme to his *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*, and Hindmarsh has suggested that 'Britten ... explores fully its ... harmonic, particularly bitonal, potential.'<sup>17</sup> The implication during the first section is not so much bitonal, however, as bi-modal, as the tonic major chord conflicts with the minor mode

<sup>17</sup> Paul Hindmarsh, *Frank Bridge – A Thematic Catalogue*, 44

sixth degree (C natural) in the bass part.<sup>18</sup> A varied repetition of the two periods is followed directly by the central B section, which falls into two distinct parts. The first is a set of three identical four-bar phrases (Ex. 7-11), the third of which is transposed up a tone. The motivic relationship between the opening of the A theme (falling E-A) and B theme (falling A-E), both of which also feature ascending leaps in the cello part, serve to unify the sections. (The quaver figure, particularly in the placement of repeated notes, may also be related to the closing gesture of the third period of the A section.)

**Poco piu mosso**

Ex. 7-11: Idylls, No. 2, bars 33 - 36

The transposed (i.e. third) phrase also appears to repeat, but after the opening chords it is diverted to a new phrase (Ex. 7-12), whose concluding E<sub>b</sub> dominant seventh is reinterpreted as a German sixth, leading to a dominant ninth on D. Rather than finally reaching the ostensible tonic G major that is apparently implied at the outset of the section, a remarkable series of parallel half diminished sevenths follows (Ex. 7-13), exemplifying once again Bridge's freer use of tonal harmony, perhaps influenced by a growing awareness of impressionism (an influence also evident in the original version of the Piano Quintet). The effect of this short B section is strangely analogous to the rest of the movement – appearing to move within reach of stability and direct expression, it continually draws back, and the final gesture is emphatically disorientating.

<sup>18</sup> Interestingly, this chord features regularly in Bridge's post-tonal works.

Ex. 7-12: Idylls, No. 2, bars 47 - 48

Ex. 7-13: Idylls, No. 2, bars 52 - 56

The concluding chord of Ex. 7-13 is interpreted as an incomplete major ninth, becoming a dominant seventh on F# once the root is added. After an interpolated E $\flat$  major chord, a reprise of the first section follows (3), via a short scalar cello passage. The role of the E $\flat$  chord is ambiguous, relating only indirectly to the surrounding (implied) tonal areas, although its function in further destabilising harmony between the parallel half diminished sevenths and the ambiguous chords of the first phrase is perhaps more significant than the logic behind the progression. The most significant harmonic feature is in fact the cello's B natural, which suggests both the dominant to the upper parts' E major (relating back to the secondary dominant F#) and the leading note to the cello's C, suggesting a highly ambiguous interrupted progression. Perhaps this is the moment at which Hindmarsh's 'bitonal implications' are indeed revealed.

The four periods of the first section are repeated almost exactly, although the final cadence is delayed by a sequence of parallel chords mirroring the familiar progression from German to French sixth by lowering the bass note (Ex. 7-14). Moving in steps of major thirds, the cello part recalls the pitches of both the opening chord and the unresolved dominant thirteenth of the first phrase, leading naturally to (and concluding with) the familiar 'perfect cadence' from the second period, maintaining the characteristic flattened fifth. While, in the absence of more emphatic cadential harmony, this provides a strong sense of closure through its repeated use (it is the only progression leading to a tonic chord throughout, foreshadowing the economical use of tonic and dominant chords in the First String Quartet and Piano Quintet, respectively), there is a lingering sense of ambiguity, which is appropriately dispelled by the emphatic harmonic stability of the final movement.

Ex. 7-14: *Idylls*, No. 2, bars 97 - 102

The uneasy atmosphere of the second *Idyll* stems principally from its harmonic language, but is emphasised by its application to a slow waltz, suggesting yet another distinct stylistic trope brought into relation with an attempt at an idyllic vision. The implication of a 'ghostly dance' relates directly to the ambiguous, 'phantasmal' sound world of several later works, notably some of the piano music and a number of orchestral works (not least *Phantasm*). Like the elegy of the first movement, this provides a frame of reference for the listener; the middle section appears to break free from the prevailing mood towards a more unrestrained expression (particularly in the second part), but the sequence of half diminished sevenths emphatically thwarts any such progress, leading back to the ambiguous main theme. In the presentation of

stylistic tropes in the first two movements there is perhaps a purity of expression, an aesthetic stylisation of emotion, that is itself quasi-idyllic, adding another layer to the characterisations utilised in these pieces.

The first two *Idylls* are thus attempts at reaching or establishing an idyll, rather than the simple, sentimental visions Bridge might more profitably have provided. There are interesting parallels with symbolism, in the expressive content of the first and the manipulation of waltz tropes in the second (looking ahead both to later works by Bridge, notably *Dance Poem*, and works such as Ravel's *Valses nobles et sentimentales*). In the third movement, a distinctly pastoral idyll is finally reached, although it shares some of the problems of the final parts of the *Novelletten* and *Phantasie* String Quartet. Its jolly superficiality is particularly pronounced after the emotional complexity of the previous movements, but perhaps this is the resolution that Bridge found most appropriate; he was to explore comparable progressions in the Second and Fourth String Quartets.

### III (*Allegro con moto*)

While it is perhaps less successful than its companions, the third *Idyll* has a number of fascinating elements. Written in a miniature sonata-rondo form in C major, there are obvious similarities with sonata-arch, although the fluid harmony of the 'second subject' episodes and the constitution of the central ('developmental') rondo theme contradict an analysis of the form as an explicit sonata-arch. The movement's most striking weakness is the disparity of styles of the rondo theme, transition and episodes; this, and the manner in which they are brought into immediate juxtaposition, recalls the third *Novellette*. The introductory phrase (Ex. 7-15) recalls the chromatic voice leading observed in the first *Idyll*. The chord reached in bar 4 is unusual – a D $\flat$  major chord over a G bass note;<sup>19</sup> the notes of the D $\flat$  major chord resolve simultaneously to C major, and the bass note suggests a reinterpretation of the D $\flat$  chord as a chromatically coloured dominant chord, with a minor ninth and flattened fifth.

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<sup>19</sup> Like the similarly constituted 'major chord plus minor sixth', this chord is used prominently in Bridge's later music, both on its own and as a component of larger formations.

Ex. 7-15: Idylls, No. 3, bars 1 - 6

After this disorientating start, the rondo theme (Ex. 7-16) is largely diatonic, with rustic fifths in the cello part, evincing the influence of Grieg and looking ahead to Bridge's own later 'intermezzo' style (for instance in the First String Quartet and Suite for String Orchestra). A sudden harmonic diversion through the introduction of flats leads to the transitional idea (Ex. 7-17), whose contrasted character is something of a shock. It is moreover extremely brief, leading to the second theme (Ex. 7-18) after only six bars. Harmony is more unsettled in the second theme, leading towards a dominant chord on D rather than emphatically articulating a tonal area in itself. A number of new motifs combine with previous material to form a closing theme (Ex. 7-19) concluded by a somewhat whimsical semiquaver passage and dominant thirteenth chord, leading finally to the secondary key, G major. The closing idea is reminiscent of the closing section of the B flat String Quartet's fourth movement and again recalls Grieg's light-hearted pastoral manner.

Ex. 7-16: Idylls, No. 3, bars 8 - 11

Ex. 7-17: Idylls, No. 3, bars 50 - 53

Ex. 7-18: Idylls, No. 3, bars 58 - 65

After the reintroduction of the rondo theme in the dominant ( $\text{B}^{\flat}$ ), harmony is abruptly diverted through the immediate introduction of flats (towards  $\text{B}^{\flat}$  major), recalling the end of the first A section. This motion is balanced by the subsequent introduction of sharps (towards E major); the latter key is alternated abruptly with C minor, perhaps recalling the same progression in the middle section of the second *Idyll*. The avoidance of the tonic lends the section a developmental character, although no



Ex. 7-19: Idylls, No. 3, bars 80 - 95

other developmental procedures are used. After returning to B $\flat$  major, the second theme is introduced a fourth above its original incarnation (5), effecting an eventual return to the tonic (i.e. by leading towards a dominant chord). This handling of keys, while seemingly crude in the abrupt fluctuations of the central rondo theme, is highly effective; sonata-rondo structure is established not through the use of the dominant key in the first episode and the tonic in the second, but through the implication of those keys by leading towards them, i.e. an approach towards dominant preparation. As a result, the B sections and central rondo theme form one extended ('non-tonic') block suspended between the stable outer sections.

A final statement of the rondo theme (7) appears in a bustling *poco piu mosso* version, before the sudden harmonic alternations of the central rondo theme are recalled, with sequential passages featuring a stepwise bass line leading to an *allargando* adaptation of the closing idea, now in C major. Perhaps this constitutes a second and more emphatic resolution of the tension accrued by the 'second subject'

episode, absorbing it explicitly into the tonic key for the first time. The effect is cathartic, preparing for a final flourish that recalls the introductory gesture.

The impression made by the movement as a whole is somewhat marred by the diversity of material and its treatment. The transition theme in particular, though attractive, is redundant and might have been integrated into the movement more convincingly. Similarly, the 'second subject' episodes are rather diffuse, although the opening and closing gestures fit into the overall pastoral tone; the continuation of the main part of the theme (cf. Ex. 7-18) seems somewhat out of place, however, and is evidently intended to provide contrast and tension. Given the ingenious harmonic structure of the movement and the treatment of the closing theme this is unnecessary, and a more concise second subject area would have strengthened the overall effect. One wonders to what extent Bridge was attempting to please an Edwardian 'salon' audience here, as the attractive but short-winded melodies, simple textures and harmonic procedures of the main section, dramatic gestures and flourishes, and over-abundance of striking material are uncharacteristic and not really in keeping with the tone of the previous movements. It is certainly this movement that encouraged the *Musical Times* reviewer to praise the *Idylls* as being 'pleasantly permeated by manly spirit and healthy sentiment'.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps here, as in several other works of the period, Bridge was torn between the economic imperative of writing attractive material and the desire to explore less accessible aspects of style and technique. Although the third *Idyll* thus has its weaknesses, in its essentials it demonstrates a successful scheme in which to present stable, emotionally unified material, without sacrificing forward-momentum. In this it might be considered a precursor to the outer movements of the String Sextet, which was first attempted in the same year as the *Idylls*.

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<sup>20</sup> London Concerts: Mr. Frank Bridge's "Three Idylls" ', *The Musical Times*, 48/770 (April 1907), 254.

### 3 – First Maturity, 1906-1911

The First String Quartet unmistakably marks a new level of maturity in Bridge's career, building on the small-scale experiments of the *Novelletten*, Phantasie String Quartet and *Idylls*. It was written as an entry for a competition in Bologna, and appears to have been composed in some haste. The competition was announced in the *Musical Times* in June 1906, with a closing date of 31 October.<sup>1</sup> As Bridge had no time to prepare a copy of the score, and there were complications in having the material returned to him (the organisers were finally persuaded to return the parts in March 1909), the first performance in England did not take place until June 1909. The quartet was successful, however, in receiving the only honourable mention at the competition, no prizes being awarded. Although Bridge felt that he had 'left [the quartet] behind [him]' by the time the parts were returned, its increased stylistic individuality and technical control look ahead to the Phantasy Piano Trio and Phantasy Piano Quartet, Bridge's only substantial chamber works written during the following years.<sup>2</sup> In 1922 he would refer to the Phantasies as 'pages of my early and early-ish mind', and they are clearly not representative of full maturity, but they are nevertheless central to Bridge's development.<sup>3</sup> During this period, Bridge maintained a busy schedule as a performer, principally with a number of prominent string quartets (second violin in the Grimson Quartet, viola in the Motto and English String Quartets). Trevor Bray comments on the ensembles:

While the Grimson and Motto Quartets made considerable reputations for themselves, the English String Quartet became one of the most important British chamber ensembles of its time. Its repertoire included both a representative selection of Classical and Romantic string quartets, and such contemporary British works as Friskin's Piano Quintet and compositions by Bridge. It also included an enterprising group of French chamber pieces – Franck's Piano Quintet, Fauré's First Piano Quartet, Debussy's String Quartet and both Ravel's Quartet and *Introduction and Allegro*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Hindmarsh quotes Bridge as writing to Edward Speyer that the Quartet was 'done [in] under a month' (*Thematic Catalogue*, 47), but this appears to be a misreading of 'it was done under a motto' (letter to Edward Speyer, 3 May 1909).

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Speyer, 3 May 1909.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, 5 October 1922.

<sup>4</sup> Trevor Bray, *A Life in Brief*.

While Bridge was certainly influenced by his exposure to this music, the effect was gradual, taking many years to become fully assimilated, even if it can be clearly felt in certain passages as early as 1906. It is often difficult to identify specific instances of influence beyond minor gestural and harmonic similarities; rather his exposure to the music of composers like Debussy and Ravel encouraged Bridge to carefully and gradually broaden his harmonic and textural range, leading eventually to the language of *Summer* and the textural complexity of the Second String Quartet (both 1915). The influence of the other composers mentioned by Bray, Franck and Fauré, meanwhile, is variable – Franck’s has already been noted, while Fauré’s would appear to be most pronounced in the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet, where the sustained melodic material and flowing piano parts contrast with the often contrived-sounding textures of the earlier C minor Piano Quartet. These French composers may also have influenced Bridge’s use of modal melodies; Stanford stressed the importance of a complete knowledge of the modes, but, given Bridge’s dislike of folk song, French music may have been a more palatable influence.<sup>5</sup> John Ireland seems to acknowledge a similar influence when he points out: ‘Melodically, Ravel’s tunes are nearly all cast in some one or other of the Greek “modes” – as indeed are many of my own.’<sup>6</sup>

While Bridge’s activities as a performer had been an important source of income since his student days, they severely curtailed time in which to compose. In later years Bridge would attempt to establish himself as a conductor in order to reduce his performing and teaching schedule, but with limited success; only on his receipt of an annual stipend from Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge from late 1923 onwards could Bridge afford to dedicate himself exclusively to composition. Although he continued to perform chamber music widely, Bridge’s interest in orchestral music was also increasing, and in the decade after 1912 he produced more orchestral music than chamber music. Two large-scale orchestral works had occupied him in the 1906-1911 period, *Isabella* and the *Dance Rhapsody*; like the chamber music, these works demonstrate Bridge’s increasing maturity, pointing towards elements of his later orchestral style. *Isabella* is his most overtly programmatic work, and is stylistically related to the late romantic repertoire of orchestral programme music (including a gallop through the night, perhaps recalling Berlioz or Liszt), also looking ahead to the

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<sup>5</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 18. In 1934 Bridge commented to Britten: ‘I am more than ever right off PHOKE ZONG.’ (Letter to Britten, 9 August 1934.)

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Fiona Richards, *The Music of John Ireland* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 24.

scene painting of *The Sea*. The title 'Dance Rhapsody', meanwhile, refers directly for the first time to the stylistic tropes defined largely by rhythm that were to remain important features of Bridge's orchestral music. The primary stylistic reference in the *Dance Rhapsody* is to the waltz, both in  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{6}{8}$  sections, which was to remain an essential element of the public nature of Bridge's orchestral music; the impressionist influence found in *Summer* and the *Two Poems for Orchestra* is not yet evident, and the *Dance Rhapsody* predates Ravel's *Valses nobles et sentimentales* and *La Valse*, and Strauss's *Rosenkavalier* waltzes by a number of years. The nostalgic and ironic elements of these later works stand in stark contrast to the sincerity of Bridge's early waltz style, which seems closer to Tchaikovsky and Johann Strauss.

Rooting music in dance (in the absence of a text) is in some ways a Wagnerian idea – Dahlhaus suggests that according to Wagner's philosophy, 'if music had no foundation in dance or words it lacked inner justification'.<sup>7</sup> Bridge's stylistic orientation in his composition of orchestral music, with its frequent references to dance and the widespread use of programmes, is therefore entirely different to that observed in the chamber music. The influence of the neo-romantic futurists and post-Wagnerian music on the one hand, and a gradually increasing interest in modern French music on the other, led initially to a further stylistic divergence between genres in Bridge's exploration of modern idioms. When these begin to converge after 1910 (most noticeably in the orchestral music) they contribute to a rapid expansion of Bridge's musical language. In Bridge's incorporation of these (in the early 1900s still relatively modern) stylistic references into his orchestral music, we may also identify something of a reaction against the conservatism of his student days. As expressionist and impressionist elements became more prominent in European music, Bridge recognised in them means of expanding his musical language while simultaneously preserving his hard-won technical control.

Bridge's waltz manner may be traced as far back as the 1903 *Symphonic Poem*, although it is again notated in  $\frac{6}{8}$  (the second theme of the A section is a good example). In the *Dance Poem* of 1913 his waltz style was to be reinterpreted, assuming a somewhat expressionistic outlook, and it is there, and in his next orchestral work, *Summer*, that we may look for some of the first concrete indications of radical stylistic expansion. In the chamber music, meanwhile, these stylistic and expressive elements

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<sup>7</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Between Romanticism and Modernism* (Berkeley: 1980), p. 9.

took some time to filter through, and are variable in the 'transitional' Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata; the full fruits of these influences were not to be felt until the post-tonal chamber music of the late 1920s, and even at that point differences of approach to genres can be identified. As suggested in the previous chapter, this duality of style, both before 1920 and after, can be traced back to the differentiation of a 'public' orchestral manner and the 'private utterance' of chamber music. (A further strand of Bridge's stylistic development, also related to genre and medium, is his piano music, which will be briefly discussed in chapters 5 and 6.)

Bridge was initially encouraged by the reception of his orchestral music, *Isabella* being his first work to be performed at a Henry Wood Promenade concert (in 1907); it was repeated in 1908 at the RCM, where the *Dance Rhapsody* was premiered later in the same year. The latter was subsequently included in the first and only festival of the Musical League in 1909, confirming Bridge's stature as one of the period's most promising composers. Although the Suite for String Orchestra of 1910 was less successful, Bridge completed his most famous orchestral work, *The Sea*, the following year. While he came to resent the neglect of his more mature music in favour of such an early work, he was clearly aware of the advantages of its popular appeal, writing to Coolidge while planning his first trip to the USA that 'where possible, I should like to do "The Sea"'.<sup>8</sup> Apart from *The Sea*, however, Bridge's orchestral music failed to gain a foothold in the repertoire, and subsequently Bridge's output of orchestral and chamber music becomes more balanced.

While Bridge's enthusiasm for orchestra music was thus gradually developing, he completed three chamber works that demonstrate his rapidly expanding (and maturing) style and increasing technical mastery, also taking his formal/structural experiments to new levels of creativity and effectiveness. Much of the groundwork for Bridge's subsequent stylistic expansion is accomplished in these works.

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<sup>8</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 24 March 1923. In a letter dated 10 October 1924, he characterised the work's movements as 'Hot water' "Soup" "Immersion" and "Waste" '.

## String Quartet No. 1

(i) *Adagio – Allegro appassionato*

(ii) *Adagio molto*

(iii) *Allegretto grazioso*

(iv) *Allegro agitato*

The First String Quartet is something of a landmark in Bridge's development of a mature musical language. Two features of the first subject are immediately arresting: firstly, the use of short, mainly two-bar units which connect seamlessly and make for more varied thematic structure; secondly, the consistent avoidance of the tonic chord. The resulting fluidity of both harmony and phrase structure is unprecedented and has significant consequences for the form of the first movement, particularly the recapitulation. The First Quartet employs a tone of anguished violence (particularly in the first movement and closing pages of the finale) not otherwise encountered in Bridge's music before his abandonment of tonality; in this it is a more direct predecessor to the Third and Fourth Quartets than the intervening Second, although the scherzo of that work also contains considerable venom in places. Its tone is surely influenced by Smetana's String Quartet (also in E minor); the further influence of Dvořak and Grieg in the less stormy material gives the work as a whole a less restrained, less French-influenced tone than surrounding works, while the influence of Tchaikovsky may be relevant more generally to the dramatic tone and juxtaposition of material. The characterisation and contrasting of material in the First Quartet is thus unusually vivid, representing an important step in Bridge's exploration of his favoured aesthetic elements, combining with more adventurous harmony and texture (building on the *Idylls*) to form one of his most accomplished early works.

A four-bar introduction (Ex. 8-1) states the principal motivic idea, *a*, followed by two dominant minor ninth chords. The minor ninth (C) of the latter is a reminder of the first note of the principal motif, hinting at what soon becomes the primary source of harmonic diversion, consistently deflecting harmony away from the tonic. *a* is itself intensely chromatic, spanning a diminished fifth and using all available chromatic notes in that span to decorate what is essentially a falling scale, from C to G. A continuation to E is added subsequently, breaking the chromatic descent by omitting F natural – the introduction thus presents only the fully chromatic part of the motif.

Adagio

Ex. 8-1: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bars 1 - 4

Unlike the Piano Quintet (particularly the revised version), in which the avoidance of dominant harmony is most notable, there is no shortage of dominant harmony in the opening of the First String Quartet. Combined with the presence of frequent tonic pedals this ensures a sense of tonic identity; the tonic chord itself is however never emphatically stated during the first subject, occurring only twice: very briefly at the end of bar 28 (Ex. 8-2), and repeated two bars later. It is notable that Bridge does not approach the viola's B directly from the disruptive C – a direct melodic resolution from the sixth degree to the fifth, supported by tonic harmony, is postponed until the very end of the movement.

Ex. 8-2: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bar 28



If in the Piano Quintet (discussed in chapter 4) Bridge found alternative ways of approaching the tonic, here he explores ways of avoiding it. The intrusion of C, and occasionally C#, consistently sidesteps the tonic chord, usually through the use of *a* in the principal theme (Ex. 8-3), whose rhythm and motivic structure provide much of the first subject material. The semiquaver accompaniment pattern mirrors the descending chromatic line of *a*, while motif *c* is an inverted version of the principal motif, its outer notes similarly outlining a fourth, with an overall range of a diminished fifth. *a2* (Ex. 8-4b) is a further derivation, as is the diminution *a3* (Ex. 8-2), both of which are developed further; motif *b(2)* is clearly related to *c*, and *b(1)* also develops into various related figures (Exx. 8-4a & c). More generally, the wide range of motifs based on chromatic movement relates directly to the principal motif. While these procedures are not new in Bridge's music, the rigour of their application is unprecedented, with the greatest part of first subject material relating directly to a single motif; the resulting motivic unity focuses the fluid phrase structure and harmony.

**Allegro appassionato**

Ex. 8-3:  
String Quartet No. 1,  
first movement, bars 5 - 9

Ex. 8-4: String Quartet No. 1,  
 first movement;  
 a) violin, bars 12 - 13;  
 b) violin, bars 16 - 17;  
 c) violin, bars 20 - 21

A short harmonic interruption by an  $E_b$  major chord (coming from G minor), followed by a typical chromatic passage (Ex. 8-5), leads to the second subject, in G major; the progression, first from E minor to G minor, then from  $E_b$  to G, contributes very effectively to a sense of increasing tension. The use of the mediant minor to distance the key areas of a minor-key sonata exposition is also found in Brahms, for instance in the First String Quartet, op. 51/1. While the material takes on a transitional character from around bar 28 onwards (given in Ex. 8-2), first subject material persists until the chromatic linking passage. The continued thematic integration is more appropriate here than the conspicuous, thematically independent transition passages of Bridge's student days; in later works he was to find various compromises, but in the First String Quartet (and in the Phantasy Piano Trio of the following year) motivic coherence was clearly uppermost in his mind, suggesting that he was at this time particularly concerned with technical matters. Brahmsian developing variation may have been a significant influence on these works (and the op. 51 String Quartets are again a possible model, as they are particularly rigorous in terms of thematic process), leading not only to more concise structures but also, indirectly, to greater individuality of style. As he attempted to gain greater control, both technical and stylistic elements became more distinctive, resulting in the increasingly mature musical language of this period.

Although parts of the chromatic linking passage relate to the principal motif and the derivation given in Ex. 8-2, it initially seems relatively a thematic. Such passages occur occasionally in Bridge's tonal music and are similar to moments of principally harmonic progress in works by romantic composers including Schumann (the

transitional parts of the first movement of the First String Quartet, for instance at bars 95 and 129) and Brahms (the end of the exposition of the Second String Quintet, from bar 53, itself reminiscent of the same part of Beethoven's second 'Razumovsky' Quartet, from bar 58). Bridge's use of contrary motion in the first part is characteristic, and the subsequent combination of falling and rising chromatic movement (first violin) with the descending chromatic bass is particularly ingenious.

Ex. 8-5: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bars 44 - 50

Although G major is avoided during the first statement of the second subject, it is emphatic during the ensuing counterstatement (Ex. 8-6). The tone is diametrically opposed to the violence of the first subject, its gentle lyricism assuming a pastoral note in the counterstatement through the appearance of the 'fluttering' semiquaver motif. Here and in the third movement, two of Bridge's recurring 'pastoral' modes emerge fully: the impressionistic vision (often associated with the sort of texture just mentioned) and the rustic but refined intermezzo style. This is Bridge's first fully characteristic 'escapist' second subject, where an idyllic escape provides temporary

relief from its grim surroundings, but, significantly, without lasting effect. That it is remote and unreal is a defining characteristic of the idyll it represents. Interestingly, the prominent 6-5 appoggiatura in the chords concluding the second subject aid the sense of pastoralism while also referring to the prominent suspended sixth that opens *a* and is instrumental in destabilising the first subject. This highlights the inversion of traditional structural roles, with the first subject unsettled and tense (i.e. requiring resolution, in contrast to the ‘healthy’ stability of the major-key works), while the second is relaxed and stable, a type of structural inversion that was to be explored more fully in the post-tonal works, beginning with the Trio Rhapsody. In Bridge’s treatment of violent, unstable principal material there is a centralisation of the unsettling ‘other’ that is essentially expressionistic in outlook and has far-reaching consequences for the structural dynamics of his favoured types of formal arrangement. This development of stylistic elements exemplifies the progression from romanticism to expressionism.

Ex. 8-6: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bars 67 - 70

Ex. 8-7: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bars 94 - 97

The deflection of harmony from G major and the introduction of an accompanying motif from the first subject open the development (Ex. 8-7). The prominent E $\flat$  in the lower parts and subsequent dominant seventh chord on D suggest G minor, which is reached when an E $\flat$  initiates a full statement of *a*. This procedure plays on the motif's ability to suggest a tonal centre without arriving at a tonic chord (as in the exposition and recapitulation, where the full motif is heard only in the tonic, never transposed; the same applies to the resumption and numerous reiterations of the motif in the codas of both the first movement and the finale).

Harmony is soon diverted once more, as the motif is elongated and fragmented, and a new derivation is treated at length as other material is reintroduced (Ex. 8-8, the violin parts deriving from the second bar of *a*, the lower parts from the opening of the second subject). One semiquaver pattern, related to the chromatic movement of *a* (Ex. 8-9), becomes an ostinato in the cello part, over which the second subject reappears. Although it is not developed significantly from a technical point of view, the corruption of its stability is significant, the violence of the first subject appearing to affect it directly. This strengthens the effect of its reappearance in the recapitulation as a calming influence. The conflict between first and second subjects is also emphasised as a result, heightening the symbolic (tragic) significance of the pessimistic conclusion.

Ex. 8-8: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bars 132 - 133

Ex. 8-9: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, cello, bar 157

The harmonic structure of the development section is unusual, with much chromaticism following the initial G minor orientation, often relating to the transition section, for instance the falling chromatic bass line before Ex. 8-8. At that point the implied key area is D flat major, although the tonic chord is again avoided. A dominant chord on G tends towards C, which is indeed reached (in the minor mode) at the ostinato given in Ex. 8-9, but an A dominant chord is interpolated, destabilising the identity of both implied tonic and dominant. After the irresolute chromaticism in the return of transition material at the end of the development (a pedal C being the only source of stability), four bars of C major link with the initial C major chord of the first subject (16). As the tonic chord is again studiously avoided, only the dominant indicates the key during the first subject recapitulation. The lack of dominant preparation at the end of the development is masterful, the apparent stability and low level of tension of C major being transformed into an agent of instability on the return of *a* and the first subject.

An abbreviated first subject proceeds as before for thirteen bars, whereupon chromatic sequential writing (using the motif given in Ex. 8-4b) leads to the second subject in E major. This is initially presented unchanged, although short counterstatements of the theme in A major and D major (of six and eight bars length, respectively) are interpolated at the centre of the section. These introduce increased chromaticism, suggesting two obvious technical models, developing variation and (with its subdominant leanings) the 'secondary development' section found in the first subject recapitulation of many Classical sonata forms.<sup>9</sup> The full force of the first subject's avoidance of the tonic is exploited in this recapitulation, imparting the second subject and its tonic major with an immense sense of resolution. At the end of the section, a suspended sixth (C#), mirroring the conclusion of the second subject exposition, is left unresolved (Ex. 8-10a), after which an accented C natural in the cello part prepares for a return to E minor. Introduced by the same material that opened the development, the tonic minor is easily reinstated. The principal motif and its persistent disruptive C are resumed, finally resolving to B in the final bars of the movement simply by stating the movement's first emphatic tonic (minor) chord. The melodic resolution of C to B, meanwhile, is obscured amid a series of appoggiaturas (Ex. 8-10b), but is nevertheless noticeable, in both the violin part (the first direct 6-5 resolution over a tonic minor

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<sup>9</sup> See Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 289.

chord) and cello part (both C# and C, briefly resuming the progression observed at the end of the second subject). The melodic resolution in the violin part is the last interruption by C, weakening even this final 'attempt' at a perfect cadence, after which the tonic minor is finally reached.

The musical score for bars 279-282 shows a progression from a very soft (*pp*) dynamic to a moderate (*mf*) dynamic, and finally to a strong (*f*) dynamic. The violin parts feature melodic lines with accents, while the cello and double bass parts provide a rhythmic foundation with eighth-note patterns. A bracket at the bottom of the score indicates the continuation of the first subject material in the next example.

Ex. 8-10a: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bars 279 - 282

The musical score for bars 318-319 shows the resumption of the first subject material. The dynamics are marked fortissimo (*ff*). The violin parts feature melodic lines with accents, while the cello and double bass parts provide a rhythmic foundation with eighth-note patterns.

Ex. 8-10b: String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bars 318 - 319

The resumption of first subject material and the tonic minor at the end of the movement emphasise the overall tragic tone of the work (confirmed and amplified by a similar procedure at the end of the finale), within which the pastoral mood of the second subject (and later the middle section of the slow movement and most of the scherzo) are encased. The transitory escapism of these episodes is an inherent element of the

idealistic idyll, and hence one of the principal functions of pastoralism. Writing in 1904 (two years before the *Idylls* and First String Quartet), Martha Hale Shackford noted that 'the origin of the pastoral idyll is to be found in man's undated joy in the external world and in his love of song', associating the idyll with both nature and lyricism.<sup>10</sup>

Attempting to define 'Idyll', Shackford notes an absence of 'tragic elements' – being 'free from dissatisfaction'; when such material is contrasted with tragic material, its significance is escapist. In the First String Quartet, the musical structure, clearly reliant on the second subject for closure, uses its stability to make a logical conclusion in the original tonic minor possible – in other words, the pastoral escape is used to bring about a tragic ending.

Meanwhile, both development and recapitulation benefit from Bridge's confident handling of motifs. The development, while still somewhat drawn-out and fragmented in construction, features a series of carefully assembled ideas continuing the motivic development already observed in the exposition. Its sections are more carefully sustained and linked than in previous works, facilitating a more purposeful harmonic structure, with the links at the opening (G major – G minor through the use of the principal theme) and conclusion (preparing for the disruptive role of the note C by coming to rest on C major) being particularly accomplished. The subdominant 'flavour' of C major is emphasised by the preceding reference to D major, serving as a final reminder of the secondary key area, G. This is emphatically cancelled by the progressive re-establishment of increasingly emphatic articulations of the primary key: the implied tonic minor of the first subject, the 'stabilised' tonic major of the second subject and the final return to E minor (i.e. the first and only emphatic tonic minor chord). In this there is an intensification of harmony that is far more effective and accomplished than anything attempted in the student works. Moreover, the tragic tone of the ending seems appropriate, suggesting a type of logical unfolding and correlation of structural and emotional progressions that is revisited in almost all of Bridge's later chamber works.

The chromatic movement of parts, often descending in parallel lines, that defines the fluid chromaticism of the first movement is immediately resumed at the outset of the second (Ex. 8-11); but while the harmonic ambiguity of the first movement's first

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<sup>10</sup> Martha Hale Shackford, 'A Definition of the Pastoral Idyll', *PMLA* (Journal of the Modern Language Association of America), Vol. 19, No. 4 (1904), 584. Shackford is discussing literary forms, but many elements of concepts such as 'pastoral', 'idyll' and 'elegy' are used in similar ways in music.



subject is defined by the tension created through the implication of a tonic and its avoidance, the opening of the second movement implies no clear tonal centre. Instead it presents unstable chords and progressions, not unlike those that open the second *Idyll*, but without reaching a perfect cadence (or indeed tonic chord) for some time. The ambiguity of the first chord of the movement, coupled with the subsequent shifting tonal centres, is unprecedented. After the opening chords, a two-bar motif is treated sequentially, leading to parallel dominant chords on F and G. A counterstatement of this introductory material is followed by tonic (C minor) harmony and more sustained thematic material (Ex. 8-12), which is treated at length. Although it is unusually long and independent, the first section acts as an introduction to the second. Its introductory function is emphasised by its harmonic and thematic fragmentation; during the second A section (as usual in Bridge's slow movements, the form is ternary) this material is curtailed and divided, its function becoming transitional.

**Adagio molto**

The musical score for the first five bars of the second movement of Bridge's String Quartet No. 1 is shown. It is in 3/4 time and marked 'Adagio molto'. The score consists of four staves. The first two bars show a dynamic shift from *pp* to *f* and back to *pp*. The third bar has a *pp pianto* marking. The fourth and fifth bars are marked *pp*.

Ex. 8-11: String Quartet No. 1, second movement, bars 1 - 5

The musical score for bars 26-29 of the second movement of Bridge's String Quartet No. 1 is shown. It is in 3/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first two staves are marked *simile*. The third staff has a *p dolce* marking. The fourth staff has a *pp* marking at the end.

Ex. 8-12: String Quartet No. 1, second movement, bars 26 - 29

The melodic structure of the C minor theme is of an unusual simplicity – the counterstatements with varied continuations (often featuring overlaps and sequence) of Bridge’s themes tend to result in progressive melodic lines, with references to principal material divided by diverging or contrasting ideas. Here, the melodic structure suggests a traditional AA’[B]A arrangement, where A is closed, A’ is open and B encompasses the three contrasting phrases introducing harmonic variety; these match the length of the A phrases and maintain their simplicity of melodic structure. As in the first and second *Idylls*, this simplicity is surely deliberate, emphasising the elegiac quality of the main theme and suggesting that Bridge is alluding to a generic type. The parallels with Fauré’s *Elegie* are particularly striking, with similarities of texture, melodic structure and key. The simple phrase structure, moreover, relates to the idyllic elements of the previous movement (whose presentation is more regular than the fluid first subject), a reminder that the concepts of idyll and elegy are closely related (a fact also noted by Shackford).

A derivation of the theme, marked ‘animato’, is used in a transitional manner, its increased vigour and harmonic instability recalling the punctuating triplet motif of the first *Novellette*, and a subsequent reference to the introduction leads to the B section in E flat. The contrast in mood, again suggesting pastoral escape with its drone bass, recalls the contrasting subjects of the previous movement. Dominated by two related motifs (Ex. 8-13), harmony fluctuates between E $\flat$  major and G major. A unison pizzicato G (recalling bar 14) eventually leads back to the introductory material. This is now treated sequentially, with a variation of the opening chords resulting in a dominant minor ninth chord preparing a return of the main theme in C minor.

Ex. 8-13a: String Quartet No. 1, second movement, bars 63 - 66

Ex. 8-13b: String Quartet No. 1, second movement, bar 71

A texturally varied restatement of the C minor theme builds in intensity, leading to a short and violent interruption of transitional material (14), reminiscent of both the first *Novellette* and the first *Idyll*. Here, the increasing tension causes a sudden outburst, revealing (like the triplet motif in the first *Novellette*) the potential for violence in the initially restrained material. After this cathartic gesture, a more complete and satisfying release of tension than that provided in the first *Idyll* (which sinks back into confusion) is possible in the contemplation of the idyllic major-mode (B) theme, whose pastoralism now achieves a more lasting sense of relief. This links effectively with the light-heartedness of the ensuing intermezzo.

Just as the tone of the slow movement differs from the corresponding movements of previous works by the adoption of a minor mode tonic, the use of a major key in the scherzo is unprecedented in Bridge's music. It is suggestive of an 'intermezzo' style based on Grieg's pastoral manner (it is labelled as an 'intermezzo' in the corresponding movement of the *Suite for Strings*, which is stylistically similar), and is essential here, being the only major-key movement of the work. Typically straightforward in construction, the intermezzo features a recurring main theme in A major (Ex. 8-14), two statements of which lead to different thematic and harmonic digressions. There are a number of subtle motivic references to the first movement's first subject, notably in the second violin and viola parts after 3. Unusually for such a cross-reference, they do not disturb the untroubled mood of the movement. Instead, a reminder of the drama of the first movement is reserved for the trio section (Ex. 8-15), which is largely dominated by a single theme, with a short, rhythmically similar idea and reference to the first movement providing contrast between multiple counterstatements. On its return (10),

the trio theme is subjected to thematic liquidation, leading eventually back to the scherzo (which is repeated *da capo*). An *allegro vivace* coda features some characteristically abrupt colouristic chromatic writing before the scherzo theme closes the movement. Such endings abound in Bridge's fast major key movements and owe much to Dvořák. They are generally inessential to the principal progress of a movement, breaking up the inevitability of the conclusion.<sup>11</sup>



Ex. 8-14: String Quartet No. 1, third movement, bars 1 - 4



Ex. 8-15: String Quartet No. 1, third movement, bars 72 - 75

<sup>11</sup> Their striking effect relates to what Meyer identifies as 'the *apparent* [increase in] significance ... of "minor" deviations' once the logical outcome of a piece of music has been reached (Leonard B. Meyer, *Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1967, 15-16). In other words, once the end is within sight, local deviation has (according to information theory) a disproportionately striking effect as the expected resolution has been or is about to be achieved. In structural terms, the significance of such 'deviations' is of course merely ornamental. Bridge was evidently wary of perfunctory endings, reflected in the anecdote related by Arthur Bliss, that when the two composers were judging a composition competition Bridge would 'immediately turn to the last two pages; he affirmed that the ending would give a very fair inkling of a composer's individuality'. (Arthur Bliss, *As I Remember*, London: Thames, 1989, 56-57.)

The form of the finale is in some ways related to that of the first movement, and a disturbance of tonic harmony is re-encountered here, although in a significantly different guise. There is no introductory passage and the movement begins with a forthright statement of first subject material (Ex. 8-16); again the sixth degree of the scale is the source of harmonic ambiguity – this time through its relatively consistent sharpening, evoking the Dorian mode. This eventually leads the movement logically to an apparent E major conclusion, although the dramatic reappearance of first movement material subsequently cancels this, in a procedure clearly modelled on Smetana. After the initial theme, a semiquaver derivation (Ex. 8-17, again given a modal flavour by the sharpened sixth degree) leads to a transitional section based on two simple motifs (*d* and *e* in Ex. 8-18).

**Allegro agitato**

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The first system is titled 'Allegro agitato' and consists of four staves (treble and bass clefs). The music is in 3/4 time and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The dynamic marking is *mf*. The second system also consists of four staves and shows a similar rhythmic pattern, but with a dynamic shift from *mf* to *p* (piano) in the second measure. The word 'espress.' is written below the first staff of the second system.

Ex. 8-16: String Quartet No. 1,  
fourth movement, bars 1 - 8

Ex. 8-17: String Quartet No. 1, fourth movement, bars 30 - 31

Ex. 8-18: String Quartet No. 1, fourth movement, bars 46 - 47

A lyrical second subject in G major (Ex. 8-19) is approached from C minor to encourage a sense of increasing harmonic tension. The similarity of character with the second subject of the first movement is striking, no doubt emphasised by the static bass and prominent descending triplet in the second half of the first bar (cf. Ex. 8-6). A counterstatement begins to reintroduce semiquaver patterns, which persist as the second subject overlaps with the development section. One semiquaver motif is particularly persistent (Ex. 8-20, related to the transitional motif *e*), as thematic material (unusually for Bridge) continues to relate to the second subject. Both *e* and second subject material are abandoned as a second inversion tonic chord is reached, and an unexpected

reference to the central section of the slow movement (13) – again used as a calming influence – leads quickly to the recapitulation.

Ex. 8-19: String Quartet No. 1, fourth movement, bars 61 - 64

Ex. 8-20: String Quartet No. 1, fourth movement;  
(a) first violin, bar 94; (b) second violin, bar 108

The persistence of a single motif for most of the development section relates directly to Bridge's experiments in the original version of the Piano Quintet, completed the previous year, where the corresponding part of the finale is entirely constructed from a single motif. While the handling of this technique is more convincing in the First String Quartet, it nevertheless impairs the sense of development of material, as all further thematic references become subsidiary. As a result, however, it is Bridge's most concise and logically structured development section in a multi-movement work so far, with material growing out of the last part of the exposition and leading towards the recapitulation, a procedure familiar from many of Brahms's development sections. The use of the repeated motif, given at only two pitches (first E-D, further cancelling the leading note, then C#-B, resuming both the sharpened sixth degree of the scale observed in the first subject and Bridge's preoccupation with the suspended sixth degree in the first movement), also stabilises the harmony, and Bridge treats the motif as a set of pivot notes, exploring harmonic possibilities with abrupt movement between chords. In

this way, the second version of the repeated motif (C#-B) links smoothly with the dominant pedal that closely follows it.

The first subject is recapitulated ([14]) without the linking semiquaver derivation or transitional material, leading directly to the second subject in the tonic major ([16]). As already suggested, the logic of this resolution to the tonic major is emphasised by the recurring interruption of C# during the first subject, 'neutralised' first by the progression to the tonic major (where C# occurs naturally) and subsequently by the reversion to C natural (a progression recalling the end of the second subject recapitulation in the first movement, cf. Ex. 8-10a). The analogy is emphasised by a brief return of first movement, second subject material ([20]), in D major, leading to a final reference to first subject material in C minor, played by viola and cello beneath a *fortissimo tremolando* C minor chord in the violin parts. This is reminiscent of the outburst towards the end of the slow movement, also replicating the end of the first movement's development section, leading back to the tonic minor by briefly tonicising the sixth degree of the scale, resulting in a particularly striking sense of complex cyclic unity. The tonic minor is regained by the introduction of first movement first subject material (marked *tragico*), providing a similarly pessimistic conclusion to the finale as already observed in the first movement. Interestingly, the short chromatic motif (cf. Ex. 8-2) containing the only tonic chord of the first movement's first subject returns before the final *adagio molto* phrase, which provides a *pianissimo* conclusion (a perfect cadence again being withheld). In the last bars of the movement the principal motif is presented on its own by the cello, as in the introduction to the first movement. The violence of the return of first movement material, and the resulting tragic conclusion recall explicitly the end of Smetana's E minor String Quartet.<sup>12</sup>

The impact of the tonal resolution provided by the second subject recapitulation is similar to that achieved in the first movement, and the ultimate return to the tonic minor replicates, indeed intensifies, the romantically tragic ending (acknowledged by the markings '*tragico*' and '*patetico*'). It is further accentuated by the previous references not only to the finale's own pastoral second subject, but also to the second subject of the first movement and the B section of the slow ('elegy') movement. Having recalled these

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<sup>12</sup> Another E minor work that may have been an influence is Mendelssohn's E minor String Quartet, op. 44/2, which has already been noted as a possible influence on the student works; Mendelssohn's use of C major as a recurring agent of harmonic deflection may have influenced or inspired Bridge's effective use of C major harmony. An important work in E minor with prominent use of C major is the finale of Beethoven's op. 59/2.



previous 'escapes', also drawing attention to their significance in achieving structural closure in the three movements referred to, Bridge opts for the only violently 'tragic' ending in his chamber output (only the Third String Quartet is comparable), contrasting with the 'redemptive' major key endings of the ensuing Phantasies, the revised Piano Quintet, Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata. While the tragic ending is not a necessity – having set up a natural progression to a 'sublimated' tonic major, Bridge could easily have finished on a more positive note – it has several advantages. It is certainly more striking, and is moreover carefully supported by the logic of motivic and harmonic elements used (and, most significantly, the relationship between the two), resulting in a complex structure and emotional progression of considerable subtlety. Interestingly, the dramatic tone of the principal material, its persistence and stabilisation, and the transcendence of similarly characterised material in subsequent works mirrors closely the late group of chamber works beginning with the Third String Quartet; it is as if Bridge had to first gain control over his dramatic material, stabilising its volatile tendencies, before attempting to move beyond it. The confidence with which he handles his material in this work is a revelation, and it is his first work to approach genuine maturity.

The cyclical elements of the First String Quartet look ahead to the arch-forms that were to occupy Bridge in the Phantasies, and there is some similarity with the Cello Sonata. That Bridge abandoned conventional development sections once again in the interim suggests that he was still not satisfied with his developmental technique, and it is only in the much later Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata that Bridge finds truly satisfactory solutions. The increased level of motivic saturation and logic, meanwhile, is an important step in his technical development.

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### Phantasy Piano Trio

Bridge's winning entry for the second Cobbett competition of 1907, the Phantasy Piano Trio in C minor, is his first chamber work to apply arch principles to a substantial

single-movement structure. While this relates directly to his liking for cyclic unity across multi-movement works, the form of the Trio is prefigured only by that of the *Dramatic Fantasia* for piano of the previous year. The substantial single-movement forms of the Phantasie String Quartet and the symphonic poems are also important precursors, and Stanford's Clarinet Concerto may have been a further inspiration, answering Cobbett's implied requirement for unity within diversity. The tone of the work is more melancholy and dramatic than that of Ireland's warmly romantic second-prize winning entry, whose ternary form is also less intricate. Indeed, Bridge's symmetrical formal plan allows for more subtle thematic and harmonic relationships than most of the ternary or episodic designs used in other Cobbett competition entries.<sup>13</sup> A number of stylistic features point to French influences – the flowing accompaniment patterns and imitative string parts are reminiscent of Fauré, and there are occasional similarities in harmony and texture with Debussy. This results in a fluid lyricism that contrasts strongly with the principal material of the First String Quartet, suggesting a marked difference in approach to writing for the combination of piano and strings, exemplified most obviously by the use of piano ostinati supporting interwoven string parts in the first subjects of the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet, Piano Quintet and Second Piano Trio.

The form of the Phantasy Piano Trio is a simple arch: A-B-C-B-A, where the A sections represent a sonata exposition and recapitulation, and the lyrical *andante* B sections frame the scherzo C. The use of such a symmetrical form allows Bridge to explore types of harmonic relationships not feasible in a conventional sonata structure, while also dispensing with the necessity of a development section. The expository first A section unfolds expansively, a short, unstable chromatic introductory motif (Ex. 9-1) followed by statements of the first subject theme (Ex. 9-2), first in the tonic C minor, then moving sequentially through G minor and B $\flat$  minor to F# and E pedal notes, at which point a contrasting phrase is introduced (Ex. 9-3). Statements of both themes feature imitative counterpoint in the string parts, and the extended use of an ostinato accompaniment figure in the piano part gives the first subject an expansive character. The introduction approaches the violence of the First String Quartet, but its subsequent transformation into the first subject explores a lyrically melancholy mood not observed in the earlier work; here the potential for violence is presented at the outset, before a

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<sup>13</sup> Apart from Ireland's Trio, consider, for instance, Hurlstone's Phantasie String Quartet or Friskin's Phantasie Piano Trio.

more restrained tone is adopted. The introductory material and first subject are based on the same material, the first two bars of the latter being identical in interval structure to

**Allegro moderato ma con fuoco**

ff  
ff  
ff  
a  
b

Ex. 9-1: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 1 - 2

espress.  
p  
a1  
a2

Ex. 9-2: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 13 - 20

Ex. 9-3: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 41 - 44

motif *a*, apart from the addition of the third note, B $\flat$ . The consequent phrase is derived by inversion (*a2*), while the ostinato accompaniment pattern is similar to *a* in rhythm. The aggression of the introduction colours the way we hear the ensuing material, allowing the gradual 'lightening of mood' to be maximally effective.

The harmonic movement to E major is abruptly cancelled by a progression to E $\flat$  major (bar 53), perhaps reminiscent of Bridge's free use of augmented sixth chords in previous works, although the voice-leading and absence of the flattened seventh degree are uncharacteristic. The sense of resolution the progression achieves destabilises the primacy of C minor, looking ahead to the secondary key area. Unlike the weakening of tonic identity observed in the E minor String Quintet, however, Bridge's treatment of the tonic major later in the movement amply balances this temporary disturbance. A short link to the transition section prepares for the return of introductory material by reintroducing *a2* and evoking *b* in a chromatic chordal figure (Ex. 9-4), all of which further undermine the stability of C minor compared to E $\flat$ .

Ex. 9-4: Phantasy Piano Trio, piano, bar 62

The tonic is apparently regained at the outset of the transition, which is substantial and falls into three approximately equal parts (of eight, nine and eight bars' duration, respectively), the first recalling introductory material and the others progressively developing it (Ex. 9-5). The use of the introductory material is pointed, establishing it firmly as an agent of disruption as tonic harmony is immediately deflected (by the presence of  $D\flat$  and the chromatic motif  $b$ ) and the tranquillity of the first subject is emphatically cancelled while a sense of thematic integration is simultaneously maintained. The second part of the transition acts as a direct continuation of the first, continuing to refer overtly to  $a$  (Ex. 9-5b). The third part is introduced by way of textural and dynamic disruption, and its material is less obviously related to the previous parts, although  $x$  is derived from  $a$ , which it contains in both inversion and

**Con fuoco**

Ex. 9-5a: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 66 - 67

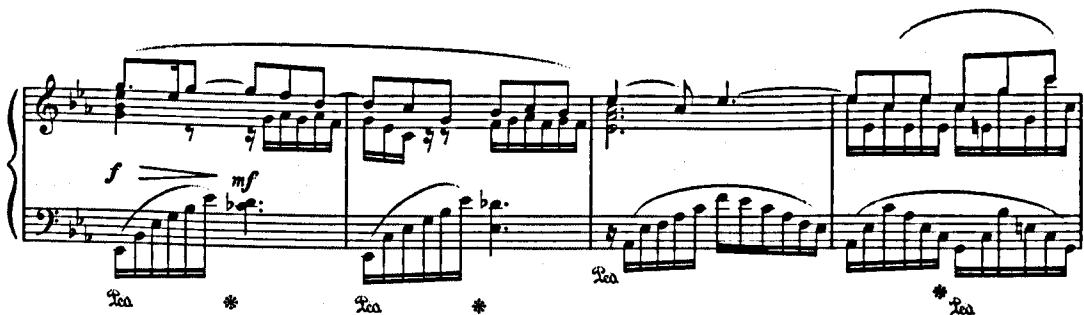
Ex. 9-5b: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 74 - 76



Ex. 9-5c: Phantasy Piano Trio, piano, bars 83 - 84

retrograde. The transition, while disruptive, is less disorientating than the introduction, and the third segment is a calming influence, preparing for the second subject.

This is initially presented by piano alone (Ex. 9-6), with a subsequent counterstatement featuring imitative string parts similar to those observed in much of the first subject. By contrast, it is warm and carefree, its lilting *siciliano* melody an antidote to the less stable rhythms of the transition. As so often, the second subject is dominated by a single theme; a reference to the transitional motif *x* and perfect cadence onto E $\flat$  conclude the secondary key area (bars 125-128). A linking section reintroducing first subject material prepares for the tonic of the B section, A major. The resumption and manipulation of first subject material and the chromaticism of the section lend it a developmental character, resulting in a structural ambiguity (due to its transitional function) matched in Bridge's output only by a similar section in the *Dramatic Fantasia*. The reappearance of transition material is appropriate to the section's linking role, and its disturbance of the thematic and harmonic stability of the second subject area is in accordance with the 'disruptive' qualities of the introductory/transitional material already observed; this sense of disruption is furthermore typical of the openings of Bridge's development sections.



Ex. 9-6: Phantasy Piano Trio, piano, bars 91 - 94

The first *andante* ('B') section relies, like the preceding second subject, on a single lyrical theme (Ex. 9-7), which begins with yet another retrograde derivation of *a*. In its calm simplicity it is a further relaxation after the second subject, with the intervening link section providing some contrast. The overall development of mood is thus in direct opposition to that usually encountered in traditional sonata structure, with the progression from first subject to development usually representing a continual increase of tension. While the harmonic motion (including an ingenious enharmonic progression at the end of the transition) does indeed suggest a departure from stability to more remote regions, the simultaneous movement away from the instability and tumult of the introduction makes for an ambiguity of structural roles quite unlike traditional sonata-form construction.

**Andante con molto espressione**

Ex. 9-7: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 165 - 171

After the initial statements, harmonic variety is provided by a counterstatement in E major and imaginative sequential material. Both this and the ensuing chromaticism have

a distinctly 'French' flavouring, reminiscent of Fauré and Franck. A dominant chord is eventually reached, preparing for the parallel (A) minor of the ensuing scherzo. The opening of the scherzo section has some typical harmonic features (Ex. 9-8), with an A minor chord followed by a French sixth; the 'melodic minor' colouring provided by the sharpened sixth and seventh degrees is also characteristic, and similar harmonies persist throughout the rest of Bridge's output, including several of the post-tonal works.

**Allegro scherzoso**

The musical score is written for a piano trio (Violin, Viola, and Piano) in 3/4 time. It is titled "Allegro scherzoso". The score is divided into four systems. The first system shows the beginning of the section with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a French sixth chord. The second system continues the melodic line in the right hand and the bass line in the left hand. The third system features a melodic phrase in the right hand with a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic. The fourth system concludes the passage with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

Ex. 9-8:  
Phantasy Piano Trio,  
bars 200 - 211



Augmented (this time German) sixth chords also appear in the parallel period following the four-bar opening gesture. The approach to G major at the end of the period is striking, featuring a series of parallel dominant chords, on B, C and D. The dominant chord on C is heard as a German sixth (in which guise it also appears towards the end of the first period, see bar 209 in Ex. 9-8), but is reinterpreted as a subdominant with a flattened seventh, recalling a similar progression at the end of the second subject during the A section (cf. bars 126-127). The free use of augmented sixth and major-minor-seventh (i.e. 'dominant') harmony suggests the influence of Debussy and Ravel. (The effect is entirely different to the disorientating parallel dominant sevenths found at the outset of the Piano Quintet finale; the function here is simultaneously colouristic and functional, perhaps recalling the second subject of the third *Idyll*.)

G major having been prepared, a second, more flowing theme follows in this key (Ex. 9-9), recurring later in the section after a span of somewhat developmental treatment of the principal scherzo material, again featuring the derivation of motifs by inversion. More notable is the appearance of motif *b* (related here to an ascending motif, *y*, Ex. 9-10) during some harmonic disruption before a return of the principal material in the tonic, now furnished with a unison string melody, recasting the original first theme material as a series of accompaniment figures (Ex. 9-11). This section is recalled to bring the scherzo to an end after a second appearance of the G major theme, making the scherzo one of Bridge's few simple rondo (sub-)structures. Although there is initially some grimness of tone, the scherzo quickly relaxes into one of Bridge's more amiable scherzi, continuing the middle section's sense of escape from the gloomy first subject material.

Ex. 9-9: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 220 - 222

Ex. 9-10: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 253 - 254

Ex. 9-11: Phantasy Piano Trio, bars 266 - 268

The second *andante* section begins in C major, but is soon redirected through the use of a lengthy falling chromatic bass line. This leads to an A major counterstatement (its dominant pedal and harmony perhaps recalling the E major counterstatement during the first B section), followed as before by the sequential material and a concluding derivation of the theme (now *fortissimo*). The intrusion of the Neapolitan (B $\flat$  major) in the closing bars prepares for the disruptive introductory motif with its flattened second degree. Emphatic closure onto A major is followed by an adaptation of the introductory section, briefly implying A minor, but moving easily towards C minor. The inherent instability of the motif provides a new impetus while allowing the conflicting tonal centres of A major and C minor to be brought into close proximity.

The first subject proceeds as before, linking directly with the second subject in C major. Of the transitional material, only the more sustained second of the three sections is recalled (cf. Ex. 9-5b), making for continued lyricism. There is little sense of transition between modes; given the introduction of the tonic major at the outset of the second *andante* and the closely related A minor of the preceding scherzo, the final return to C major creates a second 'layer' of tonal structure, overlapping with the structure of the (sonata exposition and recapitulation) A sections. In this way C major emerges as an alternative tonic before the recapitulation, drawing the tonal centres of the inner B and C sections into a closer relationship with the tonic. Such a procedure would be impracticable in a conventional sonata form – the introduction of the tonic major before the recapitulation would weaken both it and the development. Here, however, Bridge can integrate the central sections into the overall design, resolving the abrupt progression from E $\flat$  major to A major (from section A to B) in the process, the emergence of C major (and, by extension, A minor in the preceding scherzo) drawing the sections together (Fig. 9.1).

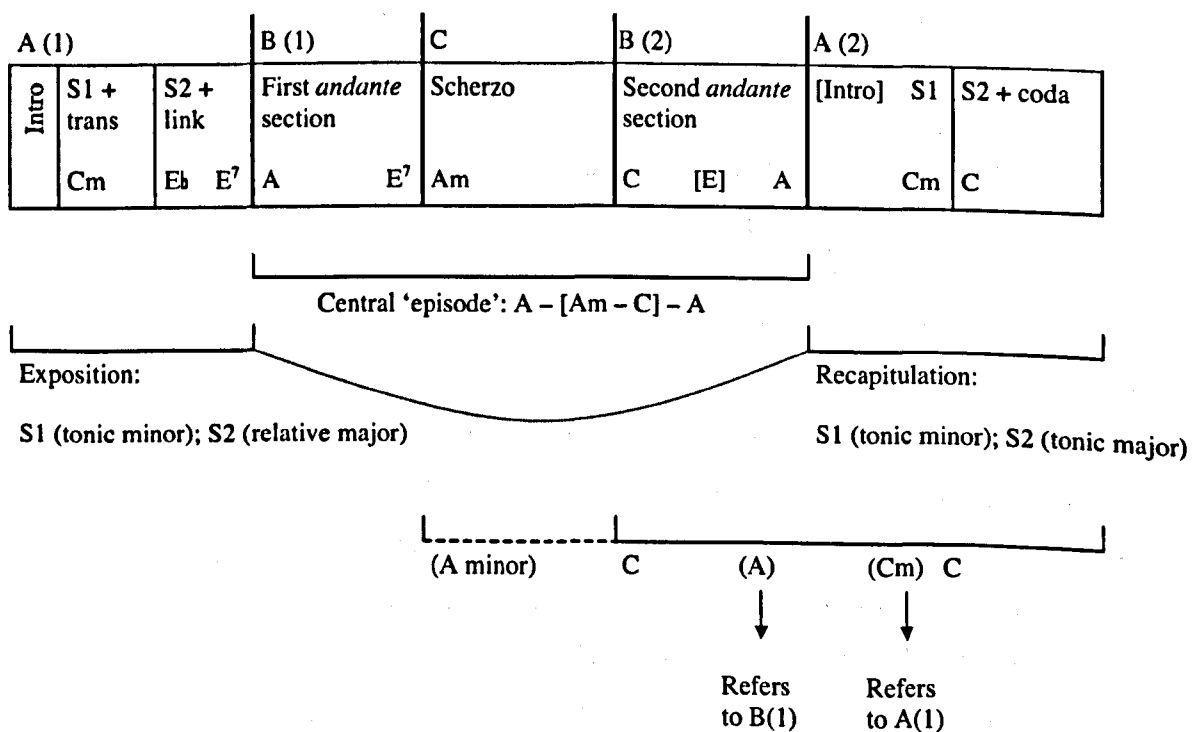


Fig. 9-1: Phantasy Piano Trio, plan of movement

Finally, after recapitulating both subjects, Bridge reintroduces the introductory motif, now absorbed into the tonic major by simply cancelling the accidentals found in

the original. Not only is the disruptive *a* 'neutralised' by this simple treatment, it furthermore adds a final rounding off to the arch shape, mirroring the introduction, and completes the progression from turmoil to contentedness by anchoring it in the 'heightened' tonic, C major. The return to the introductory motif also serves to emphasise its motivic primacy. The conventional order of subjects (rather than the complete symmetry provided by sonata-arch), meanwhile, is essential in articulating the emerging harmonic tendency towards the tonic major and the resulting tonal structure, progressively marginalising A major and C minor as C major assumes the role of stable principal key area.

In the Phantasy Piano Trio, Bridge begins to explore his technical inclination for sustained, lyrical material, balanced in contrasting, structurally significant sections. Combined with his concentration on minor-key principal harmonic areas (and their 'weak' mediant-orientated secondary areas), this represents a turn away from the primarily Germanic construct of healthy, vigorous stability explored in the principal material of the student works (particularly the B flat String Quartet) and final movements of the *Novelletten* and *Idylls*.<sup>14</sup> In using opposing forces articulating violent instability (such as the principal material of the First String Quartet and introductory material of the Phantasy Piano Trio), restrained melancholy (the first subjects of the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet) and gentle lyricism (second subject themes and the slow sections of the Phantasies), Bridge was emphatically rejecting the ideal of 'healthy', manly music, and hence risked an interpretation of his music as effeminate or unhealthy. One wonders whether Bridge was concerned about the possibility of such an interpretation – it is not a criticism that appears to have been levelled at him directly, but it was certainly a relevant concept in music criticism of the time.<sup>15</sup>

Derek B. Scott, in his article on 'The Sexual Politics of Victorian Musical Aesthetics', quotes Richard Leppert's observation that 'the pronounced "masculinity" evident in the aggressiveness, assertiveness and insistence in so much nineteenth-

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<sup>14</sup> Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson identify a range of binary oppositions associated with virile and effeminate musical characters, including 'structural/lyrical' and 'dominant/mediant', distinctions that are immediately relevant to Bridge's music. Biddle and Gibson (eds.), *Masculinity and Western Musical Practice*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2009, 15.

<sup>15</sup> Liane Curtis's observation that the gendered coding of musical material 'was undeniably a presence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when Rebecca Clarke received her training and musical education', also noting that 'she was conversant with the mainstream repertory of the Germanic tradition from which theorists such as Marx and Riemann drew their understanding of music', similarly applies to Bridge. Liane Curtis, 'Rebecca Clarke and Sonata Form: Questions of Gender and Genre', *The Musical Quarterly* 81/3 (Autumn 1997), 399.

century instrumental music – from piano sonatas to symphonies – in part constitutes an impassioned outburst by male artists entreating not only for the centrality of their artistic exercise as protest over their own marginalization but also as the sonic denial of the cultural effeminization which accompanies them as artist.<sup>16</sup> Brahms's music was described as 'the outcome of a thoroughly masculine nature' in an article entitled 'Manliness in Music' in *The Musical Times* in 1889.<sup>17</sup> Less vigorous music was prone to being considered effeminate, in the most negative sense: discussing Chopin's Nocturnes in 1900, James Huneker suggested that 'the poetic side of men of genius is feminine, and in Chopin the feminine note was over emphasized – at times it was almost hysterical – particularly in these nocturnes.'<sup>18</sup> Scott notes that 'the full impact of this description relies on the knowledge that hysteria, along with neurasthenia (nervous exhaustion) and anorexia, was an illness particularly associated with women in the later nineteenth century.'<sup>19</sup>

Thus 'nineteenth-century aesthetics tended to bifurcate into theories of the sublime (which was typified by qualities such as the awesome, solemn, pathetic, colossal, lofty and majestic), and the beautiful (typified by qualities of the graceful, charming, delicate, playful and pretty).'<sup>20</sup> This illustrates both how the intrusion of melancholy into 'feminine' elements easily becomes classified as neurotic, and why 'greatness' in music was seen as essentially masculine. Bridge's dilemma in shaping 'colossal, lofty and majestic' (i.e. substantial and historically prestigious) forms from lyrical, often melancholy material is obvious – perhaps we may recognise this as one of the defining factors in his exploration of unorthodox structures. One might go so far as to say that, in much of his mature music, traditional gender representations are transformed radically,

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<sup>16</sup> Richard Leppert, 'The Piano, Misogyny and "The Kreutzer Sonata"', (*The Sight of Sound*, 153-87), quoted in Derek B. Scott, 'The Sexual Politics of Victorian Musical Aesthetics' (*Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 119/1, 1994), 98. As Leppert notes, music was fundamentally in danger of being dismissed as unmanly, intensifying the importance of writing 'manly' music. Fred G. Smith's letter to the *Music Supervisors' Journal* (5/1, September 1918, 12) is emblematic of the first point; he urges schools to point out to its male students 'who consider Music effeminate' that 'all the great composers were men' and 'the men who are playing and singing on the Concert stage and in Grand Opera have to be and are men of splendid physique and considerable intellectual attainment'. Ideas about material specifically suggestive of manliness and the desirability of such material in music are in line with what Claudia Nelson identifies as 'the gradual displacement of mid-century religiosity by late-century biology [which] involved a shift from an ideal for boys that was essentially androgynous to one that was self-consciously masculine.' (Claudia Nelson, 'Sex and the Single Boy: Ideals of Manliness and Sexuality in Victorian Literature for Boys', *Victorian Studies*, 32/4, Summer 1989, 525.)

<sup>17</sup> 'Manliness in Music', *The Musical Times* (30/558, Aug 1889), 461.

<sup>18</sup> James Huneker, *Chopin: The Man and His Music* (New York, 1900), quoted in Scott, 'The Sexual Politics of Victorian Musical Aesthetics', 98.

<sup>19</sup> Scott, 'The Sexual Politics of Victorian Musical Aesthetics', 98.

<sup>20</sup> Scott, 'The Sexual Politics of Victorian Musical Aesthetics', 99.

with feminine principal material contrasting with pastorally redemptive material. There is perhaps a similarity with Tchaikovsky, some of whose music was accused of being (again by Huneker) 'truly pathological', while the *Musical Times* noted 'the moody melancholy, and occasional hysteria' of the first movement of Tchaikovsky's Third String Quartet.<sup>21</sup> The French influence on Bridge's music was further prone to disapproval, its languid lyricism and emphasis on colour lacking robustness and vigour, and failing to express 'the larger and broader aspects of humanity' or 'paint with the great brush or on the great canvas'.<sup>22</sup>

The structural implications of 'unmanly' material in tonal works such as the Phantasy Piano Trio, Phantasy Piano Quartet, Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata combine with those of the violent/expressionist elements noted in places (the First String Quartet is the most striking example) to develop into the expressionist principal material of the post-tonal works, an idiom itself strongly related to neurosis in contemporary criticism (a connection that clearly informs much of the hostility to which Bridge's late music was subjected).<sup>23</sup> In the classification of musical material as 'disturbed' or 'unhealthy' there is an obvious moral value-judgement that must have been painful for Bridge.<sup>24</sup> It is difficult to gauge how troubling Bridge may have found these issues, but it seems likely that they preoccupied him to some degree. Further issues such as the un-English 'neurotic' intellectualism of Bridge's modern influences and his non-participation in the War make the picture almost impossibly complicated. His artistic vision was, however, apparently sufficiently clear to allow him to pursue an exploration of his musical personality in the face of such hostile criticism.

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<sup>21</sup> James Huneker, *Mezzotints in Modern Music* (London: William Reeves, 1928); *The Musical Times*, April 1901; quoted in Thomas, 'The Impact of Russian Music in England 1893-1929', 34.

<sup>22</sup> W.H. Hadow, 'Some Tendencies in Modern Music', *Edinburgh Review* (1906), quoted in Matthew Riley's 'Liberal Critics and Modern Music in the Post-Victorian Age', *British Music and Modernism, 1895-1960*, ed. Matthew Riley (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 18. Hadow is discussing Debussy; it should be noted that the article is generally well-disposed towards Debussy, but Hadow evidently feels compelled to point out the supposed weaknesses.

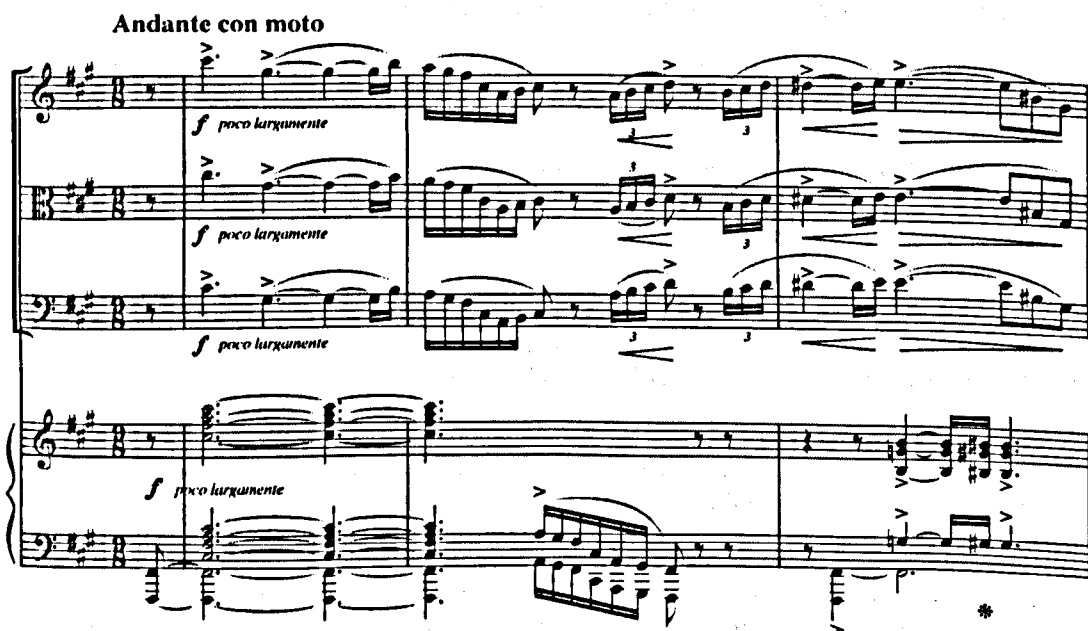
<sup>23</sup> As noted by Leo Treitler, the association of progressive tendencies in music with ill health and effeminacy go back as far as Boethius, who commented on 'the present state of music' in the early sixth century thus: 'Since humanity is now lascivious and effeminate, it is wholly captivated by scenic and theatrical modes.' Treitler, 'Gender and other Dualities of Music History', *Musicology and Difference*, ed. Ruth A. Solie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 23.

<sup>24</sup> This moral judgement is curiously reflected in the supposed reaction of RCM director Sir Hugh Allen to Britten's intention to study with Berg. See Mitchell and Reed, *Letters from a Life - Selected Letters and Diaries of Benjamin Britten, vol. 1 1923-39* (London: Faber, 1991), 395, for a discussion of this episode. For a discussion of modernism and its association with neurosis and immorality, see David Metzger, 'The New York Reception of "Pierrot lunaire"', *The Musical Quarterly* 78/4 (Winter, 1994).

## Phantasy Piano Quartet

The Phantasy in F# minor was completed in 1910, three years after the Phantasy Piano Trio, and, like the earlier Phantasies, owes its existence to the activities of W.W. Cobbett. It was not, however, composed for one of Cobbett's competitions, but was one of a series of commissioned works.<sup>25</sup> While the form of the Phantasy Piano Quartet closely approximates that of the Trio (including the A-B-C-B-A outline, although here B and C comprise a scherzo and trio), many details of construction are unusual in Bridge's output and signal his continued intention to expand his technical range. It is the longest single movement in Bridge's tonal chamber work to dispense with sonata procedures, and several typical features are recast to significant effect. The work opens, for instance, with a forthright unison statement of a short introductory theme establishing the tonic key (Ex. 10-1). Unusually, this introductory passage is not related to the ensuing theme (Ex. 10-2), in the manner of similar openings – such as the first movements of the E minor String Quintet, original version of the Piano Quintet and Phantasie String Quartet. Nor does the material serve as a source of tension in the manner of the Phantasy Piano Trio. It would appear that Bridge's reasons in choosing

Andante con moto



Ex. 10-1: Phantasy Piano Quartet, bars 1 - 3

<sup>25</sup> The other composers to receive commissions were Benjamin Dale, Walton O'Donnell, James Friskin, Vaughan Williams, Donald Tovey, Richard Walthew, John McEwen, York Bowen, Ethel Barns and Thomas Dunhill.

Ex. 10-2: Phantasy Piano Quartet, piano, bars 7 - 10

this opening are twofold: firstly, to immediately establish the tonic key; secondly, to present a more dramatic and arresting opening to the work than the gentler succeeding theme could provide. The effect here stands in stark contrast to the opening of the Phantasy Piano Trio, being melodramatic rather than violently unstable. That said, the progression from dramatic to melancholy material is of course similar, again initiating a gradual ‘lightening of mood’.

A second segment, in D major, is marked by two motifs initially presented together – a cello theme deriving principally from the fourth bar of the main theme’s first phrase (Ex. 10-3, cf. Ex. 10-2) and a piano part featuring triplets. The tonic is eventually regained, by first reinstating G# and then sharpening B, resulting in a French sixth leading back to F# minor. The alteration of a tonicised chord to become an augmented sixth looks ahead to the revision of the Piano Quintet.

Ex. 10-3: Phantasy Piano Quartet, bars 26 - 28



The resumption of the tonic and main theme leads, via a pivot note (A), to a scherzo in D minor. The pivot note is also texturally related to the preceding section (Ex. 10-4a), soon becoming an accompaniment pattern for the principal scherzo theme (Ex. 10-4b; the accompaniment is perhaps also reminiscent of the D major section, cf. Ex. 10-3, as well as the piano's right hand pattern at [1]<sup>3</sup>).<sup>26</sup> As in the Phantasy Piano Trio, the scherzo is relatively gentle, evincing a distinctly Mendelssohnian atmosphere. The theme receives a number of varied statements, leading to a more flowing second idea (Ex. 10-5) via a transitional derivation. The second theme begins in A $\flat$  major, but maintains a fluid chromaticism through a falling (mainly chromatic) bass line. Eventually the scherzo theme is reintroduced over a dominant pedal; this does not resolve, and a root position D minor chord is avoided, leading instead to a half diminished seventh chord on D. (This chord can already be observed in the continuation of the second phrase of the scherzo theme, where the flattened fifth is effectively treated

**Allegro vivace**



Ex. 10-4a: Phantasy Piano Quartet, piano, bars 52 - 53



Ex. 10-4b: Phantasy Piano Quartet, bars 63 - 66

<sup>26</sup> NB: [1]<sup>3</sup> = 'third bar of [1]'; I will use this method of reference throughout.

Ex. 10-5: Phantasy Piano Quartet, bars 91 - 93

as an appoggiatura – augmented fourth to perfect fifth.) This leads naturally (as an incomplete major ninth) to the key of the trio, E $\flat$  major.

The trio is relaxed and lyrical, its theme (Ex. 10-6) deriving from the Quartet's introduction (cf. Ex. 10-1), although some interesting harmony creates contrast at the centre of the section. The trio is relatively short and largely monothematic, leading back to D minor via a characteristic dominant seventh chord with a flattened fifth (the tonicised E $\flat$  itself now becoming the flattened fifth – an unusual type of pivot note). After a brief return of scherzo material, the second A section is introduced by the alternation of a short, subdued version of the introductory/trio theme and the A section's first theme (*Tempo dell' introduzione. Andante con moto*). The drama of the introduction is postponed until the reinstatement of the tonic, as D minor is retained at the outset of this section (instead of F# minor). This leads quickly and naturally to D major and the second theme, which is extended to return to a prolonged and climactic statement of the main theme in the original tonic. The effect of this return to F# minor, as well as the impassioned tone of the statement, is again melodramatic, supplementing the work's harmonic arch with a corresponding emotional arch. (The effect is also calculated to be similar to the return of principal material in the tonic key in a sonata recapitulation, while the preceding progression from D minor to D major and use of the second theme highlights the arch-shaped arrangement.) Interestingly, D minor returns briefly before the arrival at F# minor, mirroring the original harmonic movement at the beginning of the scherzo, and including the briefest appearance of the pivot note, A.

L'istesso tempo

Ex. 10-6: Phantasy Piano Quartet, bars 148 - 157

A *tranquillo* coda in F# major follows, recalling scherzo material amid some characteristic chromatic movement of parts, acting essentially as a prolonged *tierce de Picardie*. The D major and introductory/trio themes are also recalled. The effect of this move to the tonic major is entirely different to that observed in the Phantasy Piano Trio, where the tonic major emerged gradually, drawing together the disparate parts of the work. In the Quartet, F# major arrives as a fresh conclusion, counteracting the subdominant orientation of the second theme's key area. Where C major usurps the original tonic key of the Trio, F# major acts as a sublimation of the tonic in the Quartet, the tonic minor/major relationship mirroring that of the key of the scherzo, D minor,

and second theme's key area, D major. The thematic references to the central sections draw these into the new tonic area, counteracting their harmonic orientation. The brief reference to the introduction/trio theme (in the piano part approaching the final F# major chord), meanwhile, is ambiguous, failing to absorb this material into the 'sublimated' major-key ending. The treatment of the theme, in its melodramatic and melancholy incarnations in the A sections and transformation in the trio (C) section is thus limited to the arch-form elements of the structure; the 'transcendental' function of the coda leaves the principal material untouched, relying instead on the second theme and scherzo material to achieve its aims, and it is precisely this material that necessitates a movement to the 'stabilising' tonic major.

The harmonic structure of the work, which emphatically negates sonata procedures, accentuates the formal arch, providing a strong sense of symmetry that is ultimately offset by the emergence of the tonic major, which is thus necessary to stabilise the key note, F#. There is a curious similarity with one of Stanford's most unorthodox sonata movements, the first movement of his Second String Quartet in A minor: in a procedure itself reminiscent of Schumann's First Quartet, Stanford begins in A minor, moving to F major for his second subject – while there are frequent tendencies towards the 'expected' secondary key area, C major, it is never conclusively established (in the Schumann quartet, A minor is the key of the introduction, while the rest of the movement is in F major). The second subject is later recapitulated in D major, leading to an A major conclusion, where both first and second subject material is absorbed into the new tonic key. As in Bridge's work, secondary key areas with subdominant tendencies are used, counterbalanced when the 'stabilised' tonic major asserts its precedence. While Stanford's movement is constructed in an unusual sonata form, with the recapitulation's initial secondary key area realising the second subject's tendencies towards the dominant (moving from D major to A major), Bridge makes no attempt to invoke sonata principles; D major is emphatically upheld as the 'secondary key area' in both A sections. As a result, while the tonic major conclusion is less essential in providing structural closure, its role in neutralising the harmonic tensions of the work is nevertheless crucial. In the final progression to F# major Bridge reveals an arch-form that is a viable alternative to sonata form in its structural logic.

The effect achieved by the *tranquillo* conclusion inverts the character of the opening, where a dramatic introduction precedes a calm first theme; at the end of the work an impassioned statement of the first theme is followed by a tranquil coda. While

the opening gesture serves to offset the subsequent calm and sustained material, the coda transcends the previous melodrama, just as the new tonic transcends previous harmonic relationships. The balance of mood and character achieved by these contrasts is essential to the success of the work, and they reflect Bridge's awareness of the effect of his material.

A willingness to experiment with harmonic relationships between the key areas of separate sections points to Bridge's mature harmonic idiom in the Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata. As already noted, the transitions between these sections are prophetic of more immediate developments, foreshadowing the revision of the Piano Quintet in particular. The harmonic transitions between sections seem abrupt, emphasising the impression of movement between structural-harmonic blocks, but the progressions are unified either by the use of a pivot note or by functional progressions featuring a flattening of the fifth degree of the tonicised key:

1. Transition from A to B (F# minor to D minor): pivot note (A)
2. Transition from B to C (D minor to E $\flat$  major): flattening of fifth results in a dominant substitute (incomplete major ninth) leading to E $\flat$
3. Transition from C to B2 (E $\flat$  major to D minor): flattening of fifth results in an ambiguous chord identical with a French sixth, apparently introduced as a dominant seventh with a flattened fifth on E $\flat$ , but reinterpreted as a dominant seventh with a flattened fifth on A. The treatment of E $\flat$  is suggestive of a pivot note
4. Transition from B2 to A2 (D minor/D major to F# minor): progressing through D major, from where the tonic was regained via a French sixth in the first A section; this progression is recalled, followed by a two bar interpolation of D minor, recalling the pivot note A (and thus presenting the original progression from A to B in reverse order)

Fig. 10-1: Phantasy Piano Quartet, harmonic progressions between sections

The result is an integration and coherence of harmonic references that strengthens the sense of interaction between discreet harmonic areas, and in turn reinforces the logic of the arch-form.

## A Note on Arch Forms

Two distinct types of arch shapes are widespread in Bridge's music: phantasy-arch, a symmetrical form of the type observed in the works just discussed, such as ABCBA (the cello sonata, meanwhile, is an excellent example of a multi-movement work featuring an adaptation of phantasy-arch); and sonata-arch, in which the order of subjects in the recapitulation is reversed. The two are used in conjunction or independently, and in the early music a number of compromises can be observed, such as in the C minor Piano Quartet and Phantasie String Quartet.

As we have seen, Bridge's use of phantasy-arch form is directly related to his liking for cyclic unity, already evident in the student works; there are many precedents for such procedures, for instance Smetana's E minor String Quartet, Stanford's First String Quintet and Dvořak and Tchaikovsky's serenades for strings. The String Quartets of Mendelssohn may also have been an influence – op. 12 makes considerable use of first movement material in its concluding fourth movement, with significant structural consequences. The 'framing' A major sections of op. 13 have no direct parallel in Bridge's music, but have obvious similarities.

The structures of Bridge's early symphonic poems explore large-scale ternary forms not unlike his later phantasy-arches, and the *Dramatic Fantasia* for piano is a particularly important precursor, with sonata exposition and recapitulation A sections divided by a short transitional/developmental section (as in the Phantasy Piano Trio) and an independent B section. The most significant examples of phantasy-arch structure are the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet, which in turn strongly influence the form of subsequent chamber works. In the Phantasies, Bridge creates single-movement structures that rely on the symmetrical arrangement of content for much of their coherence. As we have seen, in the Phantasy Piano Trio Bridge offsets the arch-shaped layout of material with a linear harmonic structure, progressing from the tonic, C minor, to the tonic major, initiated by the abrupt deflection of harmony towards a remote key, A major, at the end of the expository first A section. In the Phantasy Piano Quartet the arch-shaped arrangement of thematic and harmonic content is transcended and stabilised by the tonic major coda. In both cases, the superimposition of more linear harmonic structures over the symmetrical arrangement of material define the structural

logic. Neither work uses sonata-arch, whose implications are entirely different and incompatible with Bridge's aims in the Phantasies.

Growing out of Bridge's search for enhanced structural logic in minor-key sonata movements, his experiments with sonata-arch have far-reaching implications, particularly in the manner in which they alter the relationships between structural units in sonata form. The earliest examples of Bridge's engagement with sonata-arch can be found in the C minor Piano Quartet and Phantasie String Quartet. The first movement of the original version of the Piano Quintet is Bridge's first full-scale sonata-arch movement, although the structure was to be completely recast in the subsequent revision. Bridge's only major-key movements to use sonata-arch structure are the outer movements of the String Sextet, which are further influenced by the form of the Phantasies and will be considered in the next chapter. The finale of the Second String Quartet is similar but corresponds more closely to sonata-rondo. The differences between these forms is subtle, depending on the character of the second subject (i.e. whether it is a subject within an exposition/recapitulation or an episode) and, most significantly, the music that divides its statements in secondary and primary key areas (i.e. the harmonic and thematic content of the central material, defining its identity as 'development', 'episode' or indeed 'rondo theme'). Bridge's most complex use of arch-forms occurs in the Cello Sonata, where both movements use symmetrical arrangement of material, and the reappearance of first movement material at the end of the second (and final) movement extends the arch of the first movement to encompass the second.

As noted in chapter 1, types of sonata-arch were used by Mozart and Haydn, as well as Brahms, whose C minor Piano Trio appears to have been a particular influence on the C minor Piano Quartet. The most significant influence on Bridge's later sonata-arches was almost certainly Smetana's E minor String Quartet, which was played regularly at the RCM during Bridge's time as a student, and he performed the work with several string quartets. Smetana's use of sonata-arch and the type of cyclic unity created by the return of first movement material to conclude the finale were evidently important influences on Bridge's own formal preferences.

Whether minor or major, the use of sonata-arch form fundamentally alters the dynamics of sonata procedure. A primary challenge in constructing minor-key sonata movements is establishing a sense of harmonic distance and tension between primary and secondary key areas, because, unlike the tonic-dominant progression found in major-key movements, the progression from tonic minor to relative major does not

necessarily represent an increase of harmonic tension, but rather a realignment of mode within a scale, effected simply by abandoning the artificially maintained leading note. It is the composer's challenge to present this progression as an increase of structural tension compared to the recapitulatory movement from tonic minor to tonic major. Already Chopin recognised the relative major's potential to stabilise the inherently unstable tonic minor key, ending his F minor Fantasia in A $\flat$  major and his B $\flat$  minor Scherzo in D $\flat$  major. The finale of Mendelssohn's op. 12 quartet in E $\flat$  major (already noted above as a possible influence on Bridge's favoured type of cyclic unity) uses the dual tonal centres of C minor and E $\flat$  major as a 'tonic axis', beginning in C minor and then simply abandoning the artificial leading note in the second part of the first subject. The second subject is presented in G minor, resolving to C minor in the recapitulation; the first movement's first subject returns in its original key (E $\flat$  major) to conclude the movement. Schumann also experimented extensively with progressive tonality, for instance in the finale of the Piano Quintet (which also begins in C minor and ends in E $\flat$  major). Charles Rosen identifies in this issue a romantic attitude to a form conceived on fundamentally Classical lines:

The Romantic generation turned back to an early eighteenth-century, or Baroque, sense of key relations. For Bach, a tonality was more closely linked with its relative minor than with the tonic minor. D major and B minor were more or less the same key for him, while B minor and B major were very different (even though a piece in B minor may end with a major triad). Not so for the later eighteenth century; having the same tonic note was far more important for Haydn than having the same notes of the diatonic scale.

Sonata style insisted on a sharp focus on the tonic. The Romantics saw the tremendous advantages offered by a fuzzier system.

[...]

Since a large number, perhaps the majority, of Romantic sonata forms are in the minor mode, they are obliged by classical rules to go to the relative major. In terms of the more modern Romantic sensibility, they are not going anywhere at all, and no modulation and consequently no polarization takes place.<sup>27</sup>

Rosen notes that romantic composers attempted to combat this problem by introducing harmonic movement between subjects in an attempt to create a sense of harmonic 'distance', although this does not necessarily equate to 'tension'. Bridge's approach is

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<sup>27</sup> Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, pp. 368-369



certainly in keeping with this practice, and he often places highly chromatic sections between subjects or advances to the secondary key area from a subdominant or 'flat' position, as observed in the First String Quartet.

Bridge's inability to sufficiently separate the primary and secondary key areas of the outer movements of the early E minor String Quintet, resulting in a weakened sense of harmonic tension and resolution, led to a series of experiments beginning with the proto-sonata-arches found in the outer movements of the C minor Piano Quartet. By delaying the return to the tonic minor until after the recapitulation of the second subject, Bridge achieves a compromise between conventional sonata form and sonata-arch, with significant structural implications.

In a conventional major-key sonata form, structural resolution in the recapitulation is focussed on two principal points or areas. An impression of increasing harmonic tension is created in the exposition by the harmonic movement from tonic to dominant; this is maintained and increased during the development, enhanced by the transformation of familiar material into seemingly 'less stable' forms. The first point of resolution is located at the outset of the recapitulation, where the return of familiar material in its original form coincides with the reintroduction of tonic harmony. The second point of resolution (at the return of the second subject) is achieved by the retention of the tonic, which contrasts with the exposition's harmonic movement between subjects (Fig. 10-2).

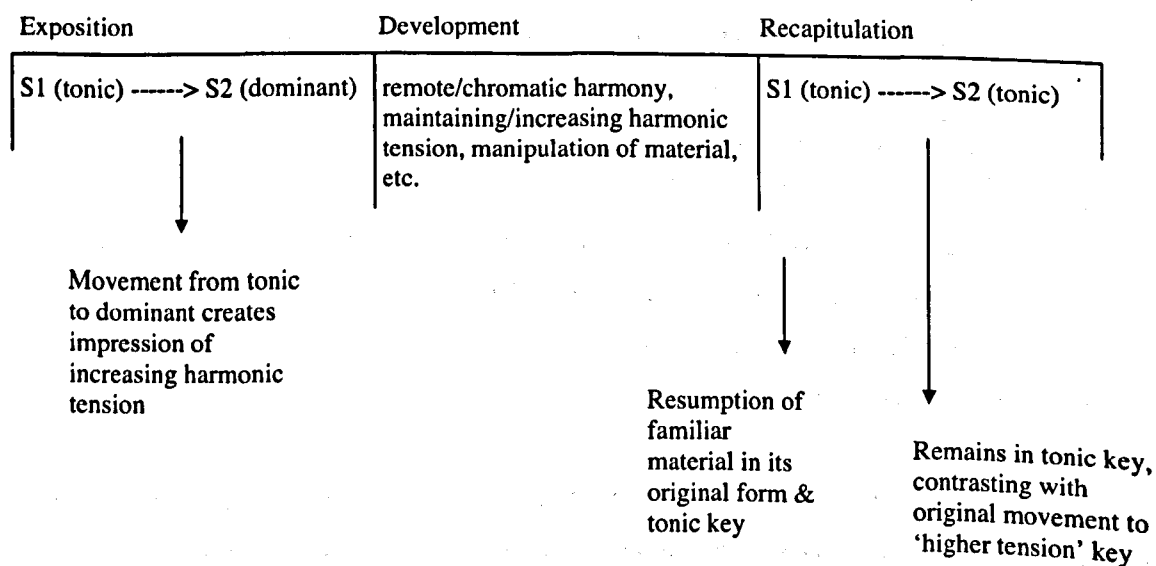


Fig. 10-2: Harmonic relationships in a major-key sonata movement

In a sonata-arch, the effect of these areas of resolution is severely altered: the tonic is now reintroduced by the second subject, which is not first placed in relation to the first subject and its key, changing the way resolution is experienced. The return of the first subject, meanwhile, adds no further resolution beyond the resumption of material in its original form (Fig. 10-3). The alteration of the second subject's structural position, from being *approached from* the tonic first subject to *approaching* it instead, thus fundamentally changes the way in which its structural role is apprehended.

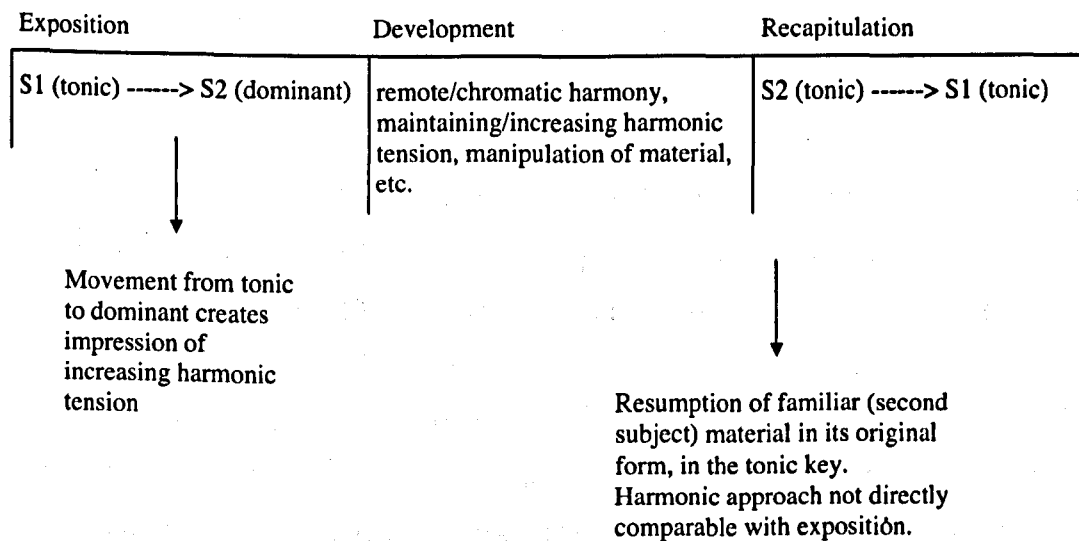


Fig. 10-3: Harmonic relationships in a major-key sonata-arch movement

In a minor-key movement, however, the situation is entirely different. While the Mozartian absorption of second subject material into the tonic minor functions in a similar manner to that observed in major-key movements, this procedure is not particularly common (due to its technical difficulties and later composers' preference for major-key recapitulations that emphasise the second subject's closely-linked 'redemptive' and 'feminine' – and hence 'virtuous' – qualities). While composers of the Classical era experimented with different tonal centres for second subject expositions (and Brahms, for instance, uses the more straightforward but unorthodox dominant key in his Fourth Symphony in E minor), Bridge and his contemporaries tended to use the

conventional relative major.<sup>28</sup> The interaction between tonic and relative major on the one hand, and tonic major on the other is less emphatic in creating and releasing specifically harmonic tension (compared to the tonic-dominant relationship); both related major keys may, after all, be viewed as more stable versions of the original tonic. Thus the relative major, like the tonic major, may be seen as a sort of stabilisation of the tonic – as already noted, an alteration of mode by a realignment of scale, achieved by cancelling the artificially created leading note and hence validating the one that is already there; the parallel major, meanwhile, stabilises by altering the mode on the key note to a scale including the original (now no longer ‘artificial’) leading note. In a sense, then, in a minor-key sonata movement, key note asserts itself over key (i.e. the collection of notes implied by the key signature), a process encapsulated by the continued validity of the leading note in the recapitulation.

This affirmation of the key note takes place irrespective of the order of subjects in the recapitulation, merely the effect of the progression is different. In a conventional sonata form the tonic major acts as a sort of ‘sublimation’ of the tonic, cancelling the instability of the tonic minor. Bridge, in his conventional minor-key sonata forms, was clearly troubled by the lack of ‘distance’ and tension between tonic and relative major in the exposition and its structural implications, finding various solutions. In the First String Quartet, for instance, Bridge goes so far as to avoid emphatic tonic harmony throughout the entire first subject, in both exposition and recapitulation, reserving tonic resolution until the tonic major of the second subject recapitulation and the subsequent return to the (now ‘stabilised’) original minor mode.

If in a minor-key sonata movement the harmonic proximity of tonic minor and relative major in the exposition is troubling, in a sonata-arch the stabilising effect of the tonic major is reinterpreted: by occurring before the return to the tonic minor, it acts not only as a sublimation of the key note, but also prepares for a ‘stabilised’ tonic minor, cancelling the previous movement to the relative major. In other words, the remoteness of key of the tonic major is emphasised, by reaching it before (and without reference to) the tonic minor, in a sense relating it to the remote keys of the development section – the tonic major does not sound like the original tonic, but like a ‘fresh’ or ‘new’ key (which, after all, it is). Its intrinsic stability and affirmation of the key note and leading note, meanwhile, prepare for the original tonic minor, which will appear strengthened in

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<sup>28</sup> The *Dramatic Fantasia* contains the only example of a dominant secondary key area (in a minor-key movement) in Bridge’s oeuvre.

a manner inverse to its cancellation during the exposition. The return of the original key (in its original mode), coinciding once again with the reintroduction of first subject material in its original form, achieves a sense of resolution further emphasising, and emphasised by, the arch-shaped arrangement of material (Fig. 10-4). The process of resolution in a minor-key sonata-arch thus asserts the tonic's precedence over a deviating harmonic tendency (in this way resembling conventional major-key sonata structure); in doing so, it also asserts the precedence of primary (first subject) thematic content. This allows Bridge to construct more fluid harmonic structures, suiting his propensity for 'progressive' harmonic structures orientated towards the final parts of a movement. The creation of at least an illusion of harmonic distance between subjects in the exposition, meanwhile, remains an important issue, and Bridge's solutions to this problem reveal much about his harmonic preferences, the Second String Quartet being a particularly fascinating example.

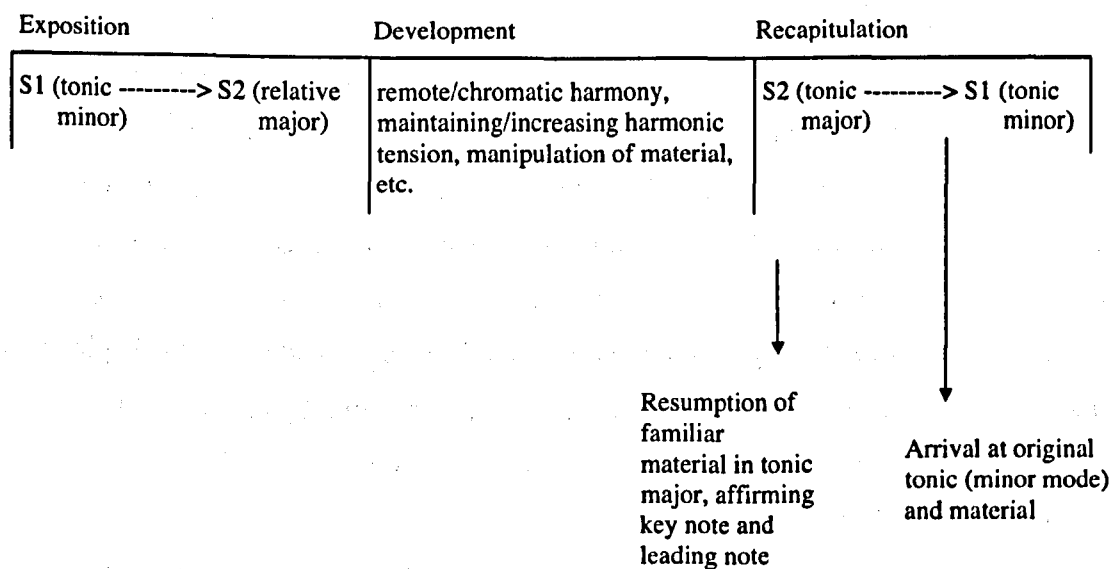


Fig. 10-4: Harmonic relationships in a minor-key sonata-arch movement

## 4 – Revisions, 1912

After completing the Phantasy Piano Quartet, Bridge did not begin work on a major new chamber work until 1913, when he began work on the Cello Sonata, which was not completed until 1917. In the interim, Bridge completed his other important chamber work of the period, the Second String Quartet of 1915. Two other substantial chamber works had previously occupied Bridge in 1912: the revision of his 1905 Piano Quintet, and the completion of the String Sextet, work on which had begun in 1906, according to Bridge's indication at the end of the manuscript. Unlike the Piano Quintet, the Sextet does not appear to have been completed in an earlier version. It seems likely that Bridge originally envisaged a four-movement work (all of his chamber works up to 1906 had used four movements) and that, as in the Piano Quintet, he eventually decided to use a single central movement combining slow movement and scherzo.

Both works blend elements of his earlier style with more recent technical developments. The harmonic language of the Quintet is particularly interesting, and will be examined in detail; that of the Sextet is less directly comparable to recent works as it was Bridge's first attempt at a major-key chamber work since the unfinished Violin Sonata. The major key provides an inherent stability that contrasts strongly with the harmonic experiments of the Quintet and the later Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata. In this chapter I will provide a detailed technical discussion of the Quintet and Sextet, with a view to identifying features typical of the early works, and the beginnings of more progressive elements. The extended time-span covered by the composition of these works makes such a discussion possible, and some comparisons between versions of the Quintet are illuminating.

There are a number of significant contemporary works, notably Bridge's most lastingly successful orchestral work, *The Sea*. An impressionist influence might be expected in such a work, but the primary stylistic reference is the descriptive Romantic manner of the earlier orchestral music. While the influence of Debussy can be felt in occasional harmonic and textural features, the aesthetic is as yet fairly conventional; a genuine impressionistic influence was to emerge only in the period of stylistic expansion that followed the carefully controlled local experiments found in parts of *The*

*Sea* and the chamber works discussed in this chapter.<sup>1</sup> The *Three Pieces* for piano, meanwhile, are relatively conservative, although some turns of phrase are perhaps reminiscent of Debussy's earlier, more accessible style (particularly in the outer movements). The innovations and explorations of the chamber music would thus seem to be particularly significant, but they are made less conspicuous by being contained within the nominally conservative medium of chamber music (and the often conventional gestures of the early chamber music style). The works of this period combine elements of the early style with subtle indication of Bridge's growing curiosity and stylistic and technical horizons; after 1912 we find a new maturity and individuality in Bridge's music, beginning with the searching *Dance Poem* of 1913, suggesting that his curiosity (or perhaps integrity) compelled him to explore more complex aesthetic regions, even if they proved to be less popular. The quantity of music produced decreases noticeably, as gestation and composition periods are often longer and stylistic and technical elements become more personal. Overlapping periods of work on different compositions suggest that stylistic and technical development necessitated a more painstaking approach, as new elements had to be satisfactorily worked out and integrated into the existing musical language.

\* \* \*

## Piano Quintet

(i) *Adagio – Allegro moderato*

(ii) *Adagio ma non troppo – Allegro con brio – Adagio ma non troppo*

(iii) *Allegro energico*

The Piano Quintet is unique in Bridge's output in being the only work to exist in two distinct versions, allowing us to directly compare his compositional methods at two different points in his development. While the revision does not fully represent the level

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<sup>1</sup> See Stephen Downes, 'Modern Maritime Pastoral: Wave Deformations in the Music of Frank Bridge', *British Music and Modernism, 1895-1960*, ed. Matthew Riley (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), for a discussion of some modernist tendencies in *The Sea*.

of maturity Bridge had attained by 1912 in every way, it is nevertheless a considerable advance on the relatively immature 1905 original. His approach to structure, for instance, is markedly different, and certainly more assured. The original reveals his ongoing problems with development sections and the use of arch-form elements is less effective. In the revision some of the experiments of the earlier version are discarded in favour of more conventional procedures, while the potential of salient harmonic features is explored, enriching the work's structure and pointing towards Bridge's expanding harmonic language.

The opening of the revised first movement differs considerably from the original, in which a *fortissimo* statement of the main theme by unison strings was followed by a contrasting phrase (Ex. 11-1 – this second phrase is omitted completely in the revision). The opening gesture again resembles a recent work of Hurlstone: his own Piano Quintet of 1904. In the revised version Bridge crafts a short introduction featuring some of the principal harmonic elements of the Quintet (Ex. 11-2): in the third bar the piano and inner string parts enter with a half diminished seventh chord on the tonic note, which resolves to the tonic D minor after two interpolated chords – not only is the half diminished chord a recurring feature, but so too is its resolution to a minor (or, less frequently, major) chord with the same root. The harmonies of the intervening fourth bar, meanwhile, make reference to other significant harmonic features of the work – a Neapolitan E $\flat$  major (over a tonic pedal) and an augmented sixth chord (in this case a French sixth, including the piano's D), whose potential ambiguities are explored throughout, often acting as a sort of dominant substitute. In this instance the symmetrical construction of the chord (potentially leading to two key areas a diminished fifth apart) is emphasised: coming from E $\flat$  major (one of the possible dominant chords to which the French sixth might progress in traditional usage), and leading directly to D minor (via a passing C, the flattened seventh being emblematic of the widespread avoidance of functional dominant chords), the apparently traditional second inversion (implying a resolution to the other possible dominant) voicing being cancelled by the ensuing tonic bass note.<sup>2</sup>

These harmonic elements, all of which are present in the original, are given greater prominence in the revised version, as well as being integrated much more convincingly into the harmonic fabric. Bridge's increasing willingness to depart from conventional

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<sup>2</sup> The direct progression from augmented sixth to tonic can also be observed in Scriabin's music, for instance the final cadence of the *Poème Satanique*, op. 36.

harmonic procedures (symptomatic of Bridge's concerns during this period of stylistic expansion) is coupled with an avoidance of the dominant chord, necessitating the development of alternative progressions towards tonic or tonicised harmony. This avoidance of emphatic dominant harmony suggests a dissatisfaction with traditional tonal hierarchies and their articulation, and its effect is perhaps more destabilising than the avoidance of the tonic observed in the First String Quartet. The functional dominant

**Allegro energico**

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Allegro energico". The score is arranged in two systems. The first system consists of four staves for strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass) and a grand piano accompaniment. The second system continues the string parts and includes a grand piano accompaniment. The music is written in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked "Allegro energico". The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (e.g., *ff*), articulation marks (accents, slurs), and phrasing slurs. The piano part features a complex harmonic texture with many chords and moving lines.



Ex. 11-1: Piano Quintet, original version, first movement, bars 1 - 10

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Ex. 11-2: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, bars 1 - 6

chord is instrumental in establishing a sense of key, and its avoidance makes for a fluid and often ambiguous chromaticism.

Both the half diminished seventh (or incomplete major ninth chord, depending on its context and function) and the French sixth are used as substitutes for the dominant, the widespread use of the former also drawing attention to the avoidance of Bridge's favourite dominant substitute in his early music, the diminished seventh chord (i.e. incomplete *minor* ninth chord). It should also be noted that the half diminished and French sixth chords are very similar in construction: the alteration of the minor third in the half diminished seventh chord to a major third transforms it into a French sixth (a progression found in the famous second bar of *Tristan*), Fig 11-1. While the half diminished seventh can function as a straightforward dominant substitute (as an incomplete major ninth – a dominant ninth without its root), Bridge rarely uses it as such, preferring to use it as an approach chord suggesting a #4-5 appoggiatura.

a) shows a conventional French sixth progression (in C), the outer notes moving to the dominant note, G. The French sixth is identical with two separate flattened-fifth dominant sevenths, which can resolve to their respective tonics as given in b)  $A\flat^7-D\flat$ , and c)  $D^7-G$ . Bridge also moves directly from French sixth to implied tonic, without intervening dominant harmony, as given in d).

e) Bridge uses the half diminished seventh as an incomplete major ninth, given in e) with its missing root,  $B\flat$ , but also as a set of appoggiaturas to the tonic, as in f) ( $G\#-A$  and  $C-D$ ). Bridge also moves directly between the French sixth and half diminished seventh, a progression involving the alteration of only one note, given in g) ( $F\#-F$ ).

Fig. 11-1: Bridge's unorthodox use of French sixth and half diminished chords

Following the introduction, the main theme is presented by the viola (Ex. 11-3, the tempo, *Allegro moderato*, a more restrained version of the original *Allegro energico*). The progression from mysterious introduction to subdued first subject combines the more restrained elements of the openings of the First String Quartet and Phantasies,

making for a complete focus on lyrical, melancholy material. The ostinato bass pattern in the piano part is a new addition to the revised version, drawing on the experience gained in creating the flowing textures of the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet. After the presentation of the main theme's first phrase (bars 9-12), a two-bar continuation and second phrase (i.e. bars 15-18; neither the continuation nor the second phrase are present in the original) are added, both of which Bridge exploits to great effect later in the movement. A counterstatement of principal material follows, beginning in G minor.

The image displays a musical score for the first movement of the Piano Quintet, revised version, focusing on the viola and piano parts from bars 9 to 16. The score is organized into three systems. The first system (bars 9-12) shows the viola part with a melodic line and the piano part with a rhythmic ostinato pattern. The second system (bars 13-16) continues the viola part and piano part, with a box labeled 'x' around the piano part in bar 14. The third system (bars 17-18) shows a change in dynamics to 'mf' and a counterstatement of the principal material in G minor.

Ex. 11-3: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, viola and piano, bars 9 - 16

Sequential treatment leads to the first appearance of material from the original version (Ex. 11-4), a four bar interruption between statements of second phrase

material, featuring the now familiar half diminished seventh (on F) in the second and fourth bars, treated as a series of appoggiaturas to E $\flat$  major in the second bar and E $\flat$  minor in the fourth. In a characteristic *fortissimo* statement of first phrase material (3), rounding off the first subject area, the alternation of A $\flat$  and A natural are treated more overtly as chromatic appoggiatura and resolution (the #4-5 motion noted above). Chromatic movement in the bass part leads to the reintroduction of first phrase (continuation) material, now fulfilling a transitional role (3<sup>7</sup>). The progression from an E dominant to G minor, after four bars, relates to the progression to B $\flat$  major during the first subject's first phrase continuation (cf. Bars 6-7, Ex. 11-3), and, in a parallel progression to that opening the transition section, the ensuing half diminished seventh on C leads to C major, the dominant of the second subject tonal area. Remarkably, this is the first appearance of functional dominant preparation.

Ex. 11-4: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, bars 37 - 38

The second subject (Ex. 11-5) is largely unchanged in the revision, with a number of improvements to the piano texture. The most substantial change, an extension of the theme by four bars (bars 8-11 of Ex. 11-5), is a significant improvement. In the fourth bar of the theme Bridge introduces a new variation of a recurring harmonic feature, effectively stating a French sixth over an F pedal. While the augmented sixth chord sounds like a series of appoggiaturas (implying a resolution to F major), the progression

to A minor suggests an interpretation as an E dominant seventh with a flattened fifth, a sonority encountered again later in the work. Interestingly, the complete chord forms a 6-34 collection, one of the most widespread chords in Bridge's post-tonal music (see 'A Note on Bridge's Post-Tonal Harmonic Language' in chapter 6), used most extensively in the first of the *Two Poems* for orchestra.

Ex. 11-5: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, piano, bars 72 - 83

After prolonged treatment of the second subject, a new section appears (⊠), seemingly a closing theme but functioning as a transition to the development section. In the original Bridge had included a separate closing theme marked 'Maestoso' (Ex. 11-6), which is simply omitted in the revised version. The revised transitional section is adapted from the original and features three distinct ideas (Ex. 11-7), the first a series of appoggiaturas with a pentatonic flavour, the second a series of string chords centred around G $\flat$  major (with D minor interpolations, reminiscent of the abrupt progression between G minor and B major before the climactic final statement of the second subject) over a pedal F. The third part refers back to first subject material, approaching A major via a half diminished seventh and flattened fifth dominant, demonstrating the proximity of these important harmonic features, as discussed above (p. 165). The third idea replaces another, separate theme used in the original (given in Ex. 11-8), whose excision (as with the closing theme) reflects Bridge's tendency towards thematic economy, which had seen him largely abandon independent transition and closing themes in the years separating the original version of the Piano Quintet and its revision. Although Bridge's manipulation of this material achieves a convenient overlap between

exposition and development, mirroring the fluid and ambiguous harmonic language, the eerie calm of the 'closing' part is not sufficiently differentiated from the long lyrical spans of the exposition. While there is some similarity with the gradual 'calming' of mood observed in the Phantasies, Bridge here fails to create sufficient contrast.

**Maestoso**

Ex. 11-6: Piano Quintet, original version, first movement, bars 88 - 90  
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Ex. 11-7a: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, bars 133 - 134

Ex. 11-7b: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, bars 141 - 143

Ex. 11-7c: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, piano, bars 147 - 148

Ex. 11-8: Piano Quintet, original version, first movement, piano, bars 121 - 122

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After sequential treatment of the last part of the 'closing' segment and an emphatic reference to the second subject, a new theme beginning with a triplet appears (Ex. 11-9), maintained from the original version. The harmonic constellation of the first three bars (a half diminished seventh on B $\flat$  over an E $\flat$  bass) recalls the same combination during the continuation of the first phrase of the first subject (x in Ex. 11-3). The connection between these phrases is confirmed in the recapitulation, when the triplet phrase is used

in place of the continuation. This relationship demonstrates not only the origin of the continuation (which did not feature in the original), but also Bridge's determination to integrate existing material more coherently into the overall structure, often by the use of referential harmonic features.

Ex. 11-9: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, bars 178 - 179

The tuplet theme persists after its initial introduction, leading eventually to one of the most striking harmonic progressions of the original version (Ex. 11-10). The ambiguous chord in bars 6-7 of the example is particularly interesting, an additional note, G, being added to a French sixth (F-B-E $\flat$ -A; the last note is in the violin part). Coming from a G minor chord, this appears to 'centre' on G or F (i.e. a dominant formation on G or F, or a French sixth in E $\flat$ ), but leads to a dominant chord on E, the other possible dominant area. This interpretation (as a French sixth in A) is emphasised by the outer notes of the piano part, F and E $\flat$ , approximating the typical augmented sixth voicing, in which the outer notes resolve 'outwards' to the dominant note. The addition of the fifth note, G, draws attention to the whole-tone construction of the chord, strengthening its identity as a 'whole-tone dominant' and emphasizing the influence of Debussy. The chord, and the abrupt, impressionistic harmony that surrounds it, is recalled at structurally significant moments in later movements.



The image displays a musical score for a Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, bars 205-212. The score is organized into three systems. The first system features five staves: two treble clefs, two bass clefs, and a grand staff. The tempo is marked 'poco a poco tranquillo' and the dynamics include 'pp' and 'mp'. The second system continues with the same instrumentation, marked 'poco a poco tranquillo', with dynamics 'mf' and 'p'. The third system shows the final bars, with dynamics 'mf' and 'pp'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 11-10: Piano Quintet, revised version, first movement, bars 205 - 212

After a reference to the first and second segments of the closing/transition section (in inverted texture, [14]) the gradual reintroduction of first subject material prepares for the recapitulation, the harmonic approach mirroring the introduction. The recapitulation of the first subject is a fascinating reinterpretation of the form of the original (1905) version, where the tuplet theme was followed by the second subject, in sonata-arch arrangement (the tuplet theme not having been related to the first subject). In the revision the tuplet theme follows the short tonic statement of the first subject (only six

bars, the piano pre-empting the strings' four-bar phrase by two bars), replacing, as noted, the original continuation, with which it is harmonically linked. By interpolating this brief reference to the first subject, Bridge moves the triplet theme from the development into the recapitulation, relating it explicitly to the first subject, while also altering the form of the recapitulation fundamentally. As in the original, the triplet theme leads directly to the second subject recapitulation. Originally, the ensuing first subject had been absorbed into the tonic major, a process delayed until the end of the finale in the revised version. The return of the first subject and tonic minor that concludes the revised version is imaginative (20), the second phrase of the first subject (absent at the initial brief reappearance of first subject material after the development, having been replaced by the triplet theme) linking seamlessly from the second subject, and leading to *Poco meno mosso* and *Adagio e sostenuto* sections mirroring the beginning of the exposition and the introduction. This results in a unique compromise between sonata-arch and conventional sonata form, achieving the opposite effect of the earlier compromise in the C minor Piano Quartet: through the treatment of the triplet theme, the development is drawn into the recapitulation, rather than vice versa, strengthening the thematic logic of the entire movement. The return to the tonic minor at this point is also preferable to the original movement to the tonic major, which seems somewhat premature. In the finale it can achieve a stabilising effect not unlike that found in the Phantasy Piano Trio.

If in the original version Bridge was experimenting with arch-form as a solution to the problems posed by sonata movements in minor keys, the revision signals the experience gained in the intervening works. The complexity of the harmonic writing likewise suggests a growing maturity, as well as an exposure to the music of Fauré, Debussy and Ravel, and reflects Bridge's desire to expand his musical language while maintaining formal coherence. The use of unorthodox suspensions/appoggiaturas, ambiguous chords, chord substitutions and chromatic voice-leading in the revision leads to a range of harmonic devices creating an often unstable but unified harmonic sound world.

The material for the central *Adagio ma non troppo* is taken from two original inner movements: the outer sections from a slow second movement in B major, the scherzo from an independent third movement in A minor. Much of the original material is maintained, although there are some telling additions and alterations. The first theme of

the slow section is introduced by strings alone (Ex. 11-11), with subsequent chromatic interruptions from the piano (bars 8 and 11). In the original, these had consisted of only one note (the first note of each interjection). The addition of rising scalic movement goes some way towards integrating them into the harmonic context, also adding a whole-tone flavour, although they remain extremely disruptive. A piano counterstatement of the theme leads towards E $\flat$  minor and a second theme (Ex. 11-12), featuring a now familiar progression from a half diminished seventh on B $\flat$  to B $\flat$  major. The material of the second theme is then fragmented and developed, recalling the

**Adagio ma non troppo**

*com Ped.*

Ex. 11-11: Piano Quintet, revised version, second movement, bars 1 - 9

*Cca*

Ex. 11-12: Piano Quintet, revised version, second movement, second violin and piano, bars 31 - 34

harmonic language of the first movement, before leading to a resumption of the first theme. A scherzo in A minor follows.

The scherzo features a number of ingenious thematic relationships, whose unity is again strengthened in the revision. The first theme (Ex. 11-13) consists of two disparate ideas, which are first presented separately, then in combination. Another theme interrupts (Ex. 11-14), perhaps related to *b*, added by Bridge in the revision; this is followed by extensive development of motifs *b* and *c* before a return of the first scherzo theme ([7]), quickly leading to a climactic statement, which links to the second slow section. The piano interjections encountered at the opening of the movement are recalled during this link ([8]<sup>9</sup>), the second interjection leading back to the tonic key from a diminished seventh chord, although it is one that seems to point towards F# rather than B. This approach connects smoothly with the dominant pedal and melodic F#, while the interrupted (subdominant) progression provides a sense of harmonic relaxation, contrasting with the initial link to the scherzo.<sup>3</sup> When approaching the key of the scherzo (A minor), he had used parallel diminished seventh chords descending by semitone, the first tending towards the actual key of the scherzo (A minor), the second towards both the tonic of the slow section (B major) and the key the scherzo seems to begin in (D minor). Both are presented over a tonic (B) pedal, making the introduction of D minor and ensuing establishment of A minor disorientating.

The return of the slow section is taken from the original, although Bridge alters the progression leading to the final *forte espressivo* unison statement of the theme, substituting a series of simple triads with parallel French sixths and a dominant chord with a sharpened fifth, connected by a falling bass line – yet again underlining the work's often fluid chromaticism within a unified harmonic vocabulary. After an impassioned statement of the theme, first movement (second subject) material appears, severely altered in character – now dramatic rather than innocent in tone ([12]). Significantly, however, it again leads to more pastoral material – first to a remarkable three bar dominant pedal (although the harmony largely implies D major) whose 'floating' triads have a distinctly impressionistic quality (Ex. 11-15), and then to the idyllic diatonicism of the opening of the movement. Interestingly, the short

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<sup>3</sup> The interrupted dominant-subdominant progression also shares some similarity with the conventional progression from an augmented sixth to a second inversion tonic chord. Bridge uses such progressions on several occasions in this work, including earlier in the second movement (most obviously leading into the final statement of the first [A section] theme before the scherzo, [2]).

Ex. 11-13a:  
Piano Quintet, revised version,  
second movement, bars 86 - 87

Ex. 11-13b: Piano Quintet, revised version, second movement, first violin, bars 92 - 94

Ex. 11-14: Piano Quintet, revised version, second movement, bars 107 - 110

'impressionistic' interruption is approached via the ambiguous chord given in Ex. 11-10, this time implying a French sixth chord leading to F# (conventionally, i.e. as a

dominant – which it is, although the intervening triads obscure this relationship). The initial 15 bars of the slow movement return to lead to a B major conclusion. The effect of the ‘impressionistic’ interruption is striking, amounting to an apparent dissolution of harmonic direction after the increasing intensity of the preceding first theme, the disturbing reference to the first movement, and the chromaticism it initiates. The transformation of the calm second subject of the first movement into a disruptive, anguished gesture has a wonderfully destabilising effect, after which the floating triads suggest a retreat into oblivion. Once the F# is established as the dominant, however, harmonic direction is regained, allowing the calmness of the opening to return. This sequence is a distinct improvement on the original, the reappearance of the whole-tone dominant in particular being ingenious and effectively handled.

The musical score shows a piano quintet arrangement. The right hand has a melodic line with some chromaticism and a final cadence. The left hand provides a harmonic and bass line with some chromatic movement. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf*, *pp*, and *pp*, and tempo markings *dim. e rall. molto* and *a Tempo 1*.

Ex. 11-15: Piano Quintet, revised version, second movement, piano, bars 230 - 234

The harmonic relationship created by the conflation of the B major slow movement and A minor scherzo is unique in Bridge’s output, encouraging a fluidity of harmony that shares many of the complexities of the first movement. The key areas of principal material are nevertheless carefully defined, and tonic and dominant pedals are abundant. These are a source of, simultaneously, stability and dissonance, the short ‘impressionistic’ section being a particularly interesting example. Similarly, bass lines throughout provide stability, often moving chromatically or by step, while offering scope for considerable harmonic volatility and ambiguity.

Having restricted the use of dominant chords to the articulation of structurally significant tonal areas in the previous movements (principally the second subject areas of the first movement and the key centres of the main sections of the second), Bridge begins the finale with a series of parallel dominant sevenths, negating any function of tonal definition (Ex 11-16). These replace the original introductory section, derived from the first movement’s first and second subjects (Ex. 11-17). A series of chromatic

chords leads abruptly to the first tonic (D minor) chord and a theme played by unison strings (Ex. 11-18). An adaptation of the first movement's second subject follows (Ex. 11-19, cf. Ex. 11-5), after which the initial (finale) theme returns in D major, leading to the second subject in F major (Ex. 11-20a). This is an entirely new addition and bears no resemblance to its counterpart in the original. Like the first, the second subject uses a ternary arrangement, with a short contrasting central segment preserved from the original (Ex. 11-20b). The approach to F major uses an interrupted progression (a dominant seventh on E to a first inversion F major chord) to create the illusion of distance between first and second subject areas; the brief appearance of the tonic major emphasises this tactic. The exposition as a whole is however rather diffuse, a fact exacerbated by the sonata-arch construction and prominent cyclic elements, making for a very wide array of material. Although the ultimate return of the 'stabilised' (major-key) first movement's first subject makes for a satisfying conclusion, the sense remains that much of the expository material is somewhat redundant. Bridge explored similar territory in the String Sextet, but it is only in the Second String Quartet that a convincing finale with complex cyclical elements is achieved.

**Allegro energico**

Ex. 11-16: Piano Quintet, revised version, third movement, bars 1 - 2

The first system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music is in 3/4 time. The first staff has dynamics *p* and *mf*. The second staff has dynamics *p* and *mf*. The third staff has dynamics *p* and *mf*. The fourth staff has dynamics *p* and *mf*. The music features melodic lines with some triplets and sustained notes.

The second system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music is in 3/4 time. The first staff has dynamics *pp*. The second staff has dynamics *pp*. The third staff has dynamics *pp*. The fourth staff has dynamics *pp*. The music features melodic lines with some triplets and sustained notes.

Ex. 11-17: Piano Quintet, original version, fourth movement, bars 1 - 10

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Ex. 11-18: Piano Quintet, revised version, third movement, bars 8 - 16

Ex. 11-19: Piano Quintet, revised version, third movement, piano, bars 26 - 28

*p* *ma con espress.*

Ex. 11-20a: Piano Quintet, revised version, third movement, piano and viola, bars 63 - 70

*p*

*pizz.*

*p*

*senza Pedale*

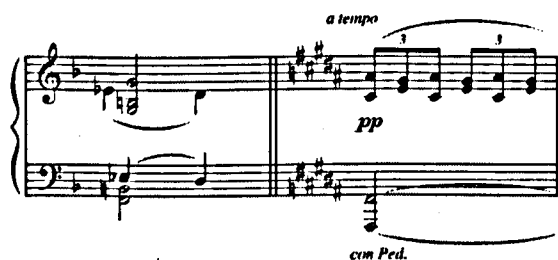
Ex. 11-20b: Piano Quintet, revised version, third movement, bars 86 - 89

A short transitional section recalling the corresponding part of the first movement leads to the development, which is again entirely new – in the original version Bridge had used a single motif (Ex. 11-21) to generate material for the development. In this the original version is an immediate precursor to the First String Quartet, but the result in the Quintet seems considerably more contrived. The revised version is relatively short and vigorous, using familiar harmonic procedures, including renewed use of the parallel dominant motif (cf. Ex. 11-16), now removed even further from any suggestion of functional use. It is this motif which heralds a short false recapitulation, before the second subject enters in B major. The manner in which this key is approached is significant, resolving the ambiguous whole-tone chord first encountered towards the

end of the first movement development. Now the augmented fifth resolves to a perfect fifth, leaving a German sixth in B major (treated functionally, Ex. 11-22), the key and the application of the chord explicitly recalling the end of the slow movement. Bridge's endeavour to create, simultaneously, harmonic coherence and variety is again evident (cf. Ex. 11-15).



Ex. 11-21: Piano Quintet, original version, fourth movement, piano, bars 119 - 121  
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Ex. 11-22: Piano Quintet, revised version, third movement, piano, bars 183 - 184

From the B major opening, Bridge can progress to the second theme of the second subject in B minor (i.e. the parallel minor rather than the relative minor used in the exposition). This leads back naturally to a statement of the second subject in D major, followed by the reintroduction of first movement (both first and second subject) material. There is an obvious resemblance to the Phantasies, both in the use of the tonic major and the distribution of material; the interaction of parallel/relative major/minor key progressions also recalls the slow movements of the RCM works. B major is contextualised as a reference to the slow movement, and the substitution of the first subject by the first movement material it is derived from contributes to a sense of complex cyclical logic. These structural processes are articulated through the fluid but integrated harmonic language with a subtlety far in advance of the earlier chamber works. While the arrangement of material in the finale is not as effective as it could be, it clearly paves the way for the complex cyclical elements of later works.

## String Sextet

(i) *Allegro moderato*

(ii) *Andante con moto – Allegro giusto – Andante con moto*

(iii) *Allegro ben moderato*

The String Sextet occupies a notable position in Bridge's output in several ways: as already mentioned, it is Bridge's first and only substantial major-key chamber work after the early period. Like the Piano Quintet, it was first conceived some time previously – Bridge began work on it in 1906, the year of the *Idylls* and First String Quartet. As the style of the Sextet differs significantly from that of works from both the earlier and later periods (for instance the First String Quartet and the Phantasy Piano Quartet), mainly because of the harmonic stability provided by the use of a major key, it is difficult to date the material confidently. In the revision of the Piano Quintet, Bridge left some sections unchanged, while he completely rewrote or significantly modified others, reinterpreting structural relationships in the process. In the Sextet Bridge clearly adopts many of the more recent tendencies, although the amount of revision necessary to accommodate them cannot be gauged.

The form of the first movement probably combines earlier and later influences, experimenting (like the original Piano Quintet) with sonata-arch and recalling the formal procedures of the Phantasies. Likewise, the development section, while substantial, is more purposeful than in the earlier works, suggesting that he may have composed or revised it at a late stage. The use of a single central movement, combining slow movement and scherzo, is also a more recent development – the original version of the Piano Quintet and the First String Quartet are Bridge's last tonal chamber works to comprise four movements – and it seems probable that he had originally planned to use two inner movements. Perhaps inevitably, the influence of the Sextets of Brahms and Dvořák can be felt throughout – in the serene, lyrical tone and full textures of the outer movements and the terse construction of the central movement's slow sections. The first movement shows this influence most clearly, from the expansive first subject and textural features of the transition (particularly in the intensifying contrapuntal textures) to the protracted development section.

Affirming E<sub>b</sub> major as the tonic key from the outset, the first subject of the first movement follows a pattern familiar from his earlier chamber works, a first theme (Ex.

12-1) and homophonic *fortissimo* phrase leading to contrasting material before returning to the principal theme in the tonic key. A transitional theme follows, characterised by motif *a* (Ex. 12-2). This is afforded a *fortissimo* statement in C# minor, after which an abrupt harmonic diversion towards B $\flat$  leads to the second subject (Ex. 12-3), its two-bar motivic units pervading the remaining material, and even appearing in the bass parts of a short contrasting idea. The resulting ternary arrangement mirrors both the structure and the length of the first subject. The restrained lyricism of the principal themes,

**Allegro moderato**

Ex. 12-1: String Sextet,  
first movement, bars 1 - 8

$a$   
 $pp$

Ex. 12-2: String Sextet, first movement, first cello, bar 54

**Meno mosso e tranquillo**

$ff$   $pp$  rit. *con tenerezza*  
 $ff$   $pp$   
 $p$   $pp$   
 $p$   $p$   
 pizz.  $p$  [arco]  $pp$

Ex. 12-3: String Sextet, first movement, bars 75 - 84

separated by more disruptive transition material, relates to the Phantasy Piano Trio and looks ahead to the Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata, while emphatically rejecting the robust virility of first subject material found in the early major-key works (the B flat

String Quartet and unfinished Violin Sonata). While the sustained lyricism thus recalls the Phantasies, the major key provides an inherent stability that contrasts strongly with the recent minor-key works. Chromaticism tends to be less ambiguous, more obviously functional. The emphatic reference to C# minor in the transition is striking, linking with later sections in both C# minor and E major in a manner reminiscent of the harmonic blocks observed in the Phantasies. The abrupt move from C# minor to the key of the second subject, Bb major, meanwhile, is one of Bridge's most convincing disjunct approaches to a secondary key area, the enharmonic progression producing a genuine sense of increasing tension, although that tends to be easier to engineer in major-key movements in any case (due to the tonic-dominant relationship between subjects).

Like the second subject, the development makes considerable use of two-bar motifs, particularly those taken from the previous section (for instance at the outset of the development, Ex. 12-4) and the transition, whose material is developed during the first two parts of the development. The third and final part (16) is permeated by first subject motifs, initially in inversion. The cellos' eventual statement of the main theme in its original form is expanded sequentially, leading to the recapitulation of the second subject, first in E major (18), then in the tonic Eb. The harmonic approach is again oblique: having (briefly) reached a dominant seventh chord on B, harmony is deflected to a half diminished seventh on B, the held note becoming the characteristic upbeat that leaps up a minor seventh (B-A) to open the second subject (cf. Ex. 12-3). The previous appearance of the first subject in the cello parts is reminiscent of the sonata-arches of the early C minor Piano Quartet, initially using the original pitches, but integrated harmonically and texturally into the development section.

Ex. 12-4: String Sextet, first movement, violas and cellos, bars 138 - 140

The development thus inverts the order of subjects in the exposition, and this inversion is repeated in the recapitulation, albeit without further reference to the transition theme (used exhaustively in the previous sections). The development is concise, pointing towards the economical and carefully structured developments of later works; its three parts create an arch-shape (ABCCBA) with the exposition, overlapping with the ternary arrangement of subjects (ACA) from the 'false recapitulation' onwards. The thematic continuity between the end of the exposition and beginning of the development, and the harmonic progression from development to recapitulation make for an integrated and fluid structure (Fig. 12-1) markedly different from the somewhat prolix early works. The polarisation of tonal regions or axes (such as C# minor and E major, which reappear in prominent positions later in the work), giving added meaning to progressions and relationships between keys, is reminiscent of the Phantasies, and is further explored in later works.

Exposition				Development				Recapitulation	
S1 trans.		S2		S2 trans.		S1		S2	S1
E $\flat$	Bm...	C#m	B $\flat$					E - E $\flat$	
(A	B	C		C	B	A		C	A)
	4	6		9	14	16		18	20

Fig. 12-1: String Sextet, plan of first movement

The reintroduction of the second subject in E major (in a sense another 'false recapitulation') fuses the recapitulation with the development; indeed, the E major statement (recapitulatory in all but key) seems to be suspended between development and recapitulation. The arrival at familiar material in a remote key is reminiscent of the Phantasies, drawing the 'remote' and 'home' key areas of development and recapitulation into closer relation. The reference to E major also connects with the C# minor of the original transition section, which progressed to the secondary key area, B $\flat$  major; the movement from E major to the tonic, again abruptly, creates a 'comparative' harmonic relationship not unlike that used to contextualise the approach to the second subject in conventional sonata form. The second subject recapitulation proceeds as before, linking directly with a relatively short reappearance of first subject material



(20). There is a particular emphasis on the principal theme; the homophonic phrase and contrasting theme are replaced by a brief reference to the second subject. At the end of this digression, D $\flat$  major is introduced as a source of harmonic variety, alternating with the tonic during the concluding appearance of the principle first theme (*Largamente*), perhaps also relating in some way to the earlier C# minor (which followed the first subject in the exposition). Both this and the preceding prominence of E major prepare for the key of the next movement, C# minor.

The second movement begins with a thoughtful slow section pervaded by motif *x* (Ex. 12-5), often in conjunction with the cello motif *y*. In this first slow (A) section, two pairs of eight-bar parallel periods frame a pair of seven-bar periods, much of whose material also derives from *x* and *y*, although a short reference to the first movement's second subject also appears (2<sup>4</sup>). This results in a compact ternary (*aba*) form with a high level of motivic integration – see fig. 12-2, which traces the development of material throughout the three parts of the first slow section. The stately tone of the material contrasts effectively with the lyrical warmth of the first movement. The harmony of the section is unusual, with frequent abrupt diversions colouring the firmly established tonic C# minor. The first phrase is emblematic, with its strings of parallel sevenths (and incomplete major ninths) over a tonic pedal, stabilised by the dominant

Andante con moto

-----*x*-----

Ex. 12-5: String Sextet, second movement, bars 1 - 4

chords that conclude bars 2 and 4. In the next phrase the tonic pedal is abandoned, but tonic chords open and close the phrase. From there, more remote harmonic regions are explored, with the tonic being emphatically reinstated in the final pair of parallel periods, with tonic pedals prevailing for three of the four phrases. The manner of departure from the tonic after the initial parallel period (i.e. during the second half of *a*) is recalled in the following contrasting periods (*b*), with much of the harmony defined by chromatically descending bass lines.

The level of economy and development of material within an expository section is unprecedented, aided by intricate motivic and phrase structures (detailed in Fig. 12-2) and the use of developing repetitive patterns. Motifs *x* and *y*, which dominate the first period, are expanded and contracted, respectively, to provide *x1* and *y1* in phrase one of the second period (Ex. 12-6 shows the motivic derivations), which consists of a pair of two-bar units treated sequentially. *x1* is divided in the next phrase, and the chromatic descending motion of *y1* yields the new bass motif *y2* (Ex. 12-6c). *x* receives further treatment in the first seven-bar period (*x3*), while *y2* is augmented. The harmonic progression of the first three bars is contracted into the next two, where *x3* is repeated with a reference to the second subject of the first movement as a countermelody. As in the second movement of the Piano Quintet, the tone of this material appears entirely altered, although the conflict of tragic and idyllic elements is reversed in the Sextet, the solemn slow section being a temporary diversion from the carefree outer movements. The second seven-bar period follows a similar 3+4 pattern, using versions of *x* and *y* closely approximating their original form. A more melodic first violin part (Ex. 12-7), with obvious motivic links to previous material based on *x*, is extended over the entire period, while *y1* and a derivation of *x2* reappear in the final four-bar phrase.

The initial pair of parallel periods subsequently returns, with some alterations: the violin melody from the previous section recurs immediately during the first parallel period, while the second now emphasises the tonic, its first phrase (instead of moving sequentially) simply repeating the first two-bar unit, its second phrase maintaining a tonic pedal. Different elements of the section thus overlap and relate in various ways, resulting in a tightly knit motivic and harmonic organisation, as well as a complex and organic thematic and phrase structure. The economy of material is impressive, pointing towards techniques used in later works.

a) 

b) 

c) 

Ex. 12-6: String Sextet, second movement,  
 a) second cello, bar 9  
 b) first viola, bars 9 - 10  
 c) bar 13



Ex. 12-7: String Sextet, second movement, first violin, bars 24 - 28

a

□		□	
PP1		PP2	
x y (tonic ped.)	x y - - - - ->	x y <sup>1</sup> - - - - ->	x y <sup>2</sup>
C#m		(F#m)	Eb <sup>7</sup> Abm
		Chromatic descending y (doubled rate of movement)	Chromatic descending bass derived from y <sup>1</sup>
		- Addition of semiquaver theme	- semiquaver theme developed
		- 2-bar sequence	- 2-bar 'overlapping' sequence

b

□		□	
7-bar period no. 1		7-bar period no. 2	
x y <sup>2</sup>	x y <sup>2</sup>	x y	[x] y <sup>1</sup>
Cm		F / Dm / Bb	F#m - C - G# <sup>7</sup>
Extended x and augmented y <sup>2</sup> with semiquaver triplet accompaniment pattern	S2 from first movement - harmony of previous three bars condensed into two + one repeated bar	New derivation of x	Extended version of x derived from previous period, becoming more melodic - harmonic movement emphasised by 'leaping' bass

a1

□		□	
PP1		PP2	
x y (tonic ped.)	x y - - - - ->	x y <sup>1</sup> - - - - ->	x y <sup>1</sup> (tonic ped.)
C#m		(F#m)	C#m
'Melodic' derivation of x maintained in first violin part		Semiquaver theme omitted - 2-bar repetition instead of sequence	Tonic is maintained

Fig. 12-2: String Sextet, second movement, first slow section, motivic structure

The scherzo replicates the motivic saturation of the previous section, presenting a number of related motifs in its opening bars (Ex. 12-8). After nine bars of C# minor,

Allegro giusto

Ex. 12-8: String Sextet,  
second movement, bars 47 - 52

harmony moves abruptly to the main key of the scherzo, A minor. As in the previous section, the established motifs are further developed and two related themes, more sustained than the previous scherzo material, are added (Ex. 12-9). Such an addition of melodic material to fragmented motifs is already familiar from earlier works and can be observed in many scherzos throughout the remainder of Bridge's output. The effect of these procedures is to stabilise the volatility of texture and phrase structure, providing a more continuous and steady line for the ear to follow. The sustained material dominates the remainder of the scherzo; in fact, no new material is added – instead themes and

motifs are developed and combined until the alternation of B dominant seventh and D minor chords disturbs the dominance of A minor, leading back to C# minor and the second A section. The tone of the scherzo is unusual – grimmer than the somewhat impish tone found in the Phantasies or the pastoral intermezzo style of the First String Quartet – looking ahead to the less polished, acerbic scherzi of the Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata. It is particularly significant here, creating variety between the relaxed outer movements.



Ex. 12-9a: String Sextet, second movement, first violin, bars 69 - 73



Ex. 12-9b: String Sextet, second movement, first cello, bars 74 - 76

On the return of the slow material, the first period is texturally recast, with the first violin part becoming the bass. The effect is one of extraordinary harmonic disorientation, contrasting with the stately stability of the remaining slow material. The next five periods follow unchanged, before a short reference to one of the scherzo themes leads to a final chromatic diversion and conclusion in C# minor. While thematic economy is an important feature of Bridge's chamber music in general, particularly in inner movements, the level of motivic development and integration found here is unprecedented, incorporating the experience gained in the Phantasy Piano Trio and Quartet. Occasional implications of bitonality (mainly through parallel movement of chords) are stabilised not only by tonic pedals and frequent strong references to the tonic, but also by the motivic logic, providing significant structural coherence independent of harmonic structure. Experimentation with the possible relationships between motivic and harmonic material, here and in parts of the First String Quartet and Phantasy Piano Trio, prepares for the post-tonal chamber music, where such procedures become even more significant.

The finale relates strongly to the corresponding movement of the revised Piano Quintet, but also has a number of unusual features. The influence of the Phantasies is

again evident, particularly in harmonic structure, and a series of thematic references to the previous movements creates a strong sense of cyclic unity. As in the finale of the Quintet, the result is somewhat diffuse. A meandering theme opens the movement (Ex. 12-10) – it is unusually long and thematically independent for an introductory theme,

**Allegro ben moderato**

Ex. 12-10: String Sextet, third movement, bars 1 - 9

**a tempo animato**

Ex. 12-11: String Sextet, third movement, bars 32 - 37

but its treatment suggests that it is not the principal theme. It is, however, closely related to the ensuing material (Ex. 12-11, deriving from the transitional theme of the first movement, primarily through the motif given in Ex. 12-2), suggesting an analysis as a first subject group made up of two distinct and substantial themes. Both are in E<sub>b</sub> major, although the first is less stable, again weakening its identity as principal theme. The chromatic movement of parts of the opening section is familiar from Bridge's earlier works, and is used here as a means of destabilising harmony within a major-key movement. The second subject also has two distinct thematic areas (Ex. 12-12), the second of which is shorter and could be interpreted as a closing theme (although later treatment of the second subject group contradicts such an analysis).

Uniquely in Bridge's output, both parts of the second subject use themes found in other chamber works – the first (Ex. 12-12a) was to be recalled in the finale of the Second String Quartet (cf. Ex. 13-11), while the second (Ex. 12-12b) is taken from the first movement of the early C minor Piano Quartet (cf. Ex. 3-2). Bridge's reasons in adopting such thematic references here (and hence in the Second String Quartet) are puzzling, perhaps suggesting that he encountered difficulties in finishing the movement and decided to recycle material from an earlier work that he had by this time rejected. The material shared between the Sextet and the Second String Quartet is not a direct quotation, more a strong similarity of opening contour. Perhaps it is incidental, although

Ex. 12-12a: String Sextet, third movement, bars 70 - 77



Ex. 12-12b: String Sextet,  
third movement, bars 102 - 111

that seems unlikely. Perhaps there is a connection between the movements and their efforts to find stability and resolution, in which case Bridge may have wanted to recreate the optimistic, pastoral tone of the Sextet in the later work, and the fact that the Sextet was performed but rarely may have encouraged him to recycle opening of the melody.

The development section is relatively short, consisting mainly of first subject material (beginning at  $\boxed{6}$  and combining with references to the slow movement in the next phrase), followed by the second theme of the second subject ( $\boxed{9}$ ). The

recapitulation of the second subject follows in D major, combined with a reference to the second subject of the first movement. As in the Piano Quintet, this section is suspended between development and recapitulation, its position unclear until it leads to the resumption of the tonic as the second half of the second subject reappears. D major, approached from the G major orientation of the second half of the development, leads to the tonic (E<sub>b</sub>) via a characteristically abrupt reinterpretation of the dominant, A, as an augmented sixth ([10]). The second part of the second subject is recapitulated in the tonic key (the local flattening of the seventh degree, also present in the exposition, is temporary but adds a particular harmonic piquancy to the progression back to the tonic), suggesting that it is not merely a closing section. There is an obvious similarity with the form of the first movement, confirming an interpretation as sonata-arch rather than rondo, with the second subject recapitulation being introduced in a remote key, linking it closely to the development section and delaying full tonal resolution until the resumption of first subject material (further emphasised by the flattened seventh of the final part of the second subject recapitulation). The resulting harmonic arch is perhaps the most unorthodox in Bridge's tonal music, although the sense of harmonic relaxation is highly effective.

The reintroduction of first subject material mirrors the opening of the development, although the deflection of harmony to A major is disorientating ([11]). A varied recapitulation of the first theme in that key is followed by a second statement, in the tonic key, of equal length. The second, more stable theme of the first subject follows ([13]), resulting in a subtle prioritisation of the second segments of both subjects, enhancing the fluidity of harmony and thematic arrangement. A final brief harmonic deflection, towards G<sub>b</sub>, also features a short reference to the first subject of the first movement; the harmonic movement towards the subdominant side perhaps attempts to balance the earlier series of harmonic sidesteps progressively introducing more sharps: G major – D major – A major. The presence of A major relates to the earlier use of E major (in the first movement) and C# minor and A minor (in the second), suggesting that Bridge was attempting to establish a secondary tonal axis to create harmonic contrast within the work's 'stable' major-key structure. Whether Bridge's use of polarised harmonic regions (Fig. 12-3) is effective is debatable (the thematic diversity of the movement, with four main themes and references to the principal themes of the previous movements, certainly does not help matters), and the renewed deflection of

harmony after the recapitulation of the second subject (i.e. at **11**) is unnecessarily confusing; his experiments here did, however, pave the way for a more coherent and convincing use of similar procedures in the Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata.

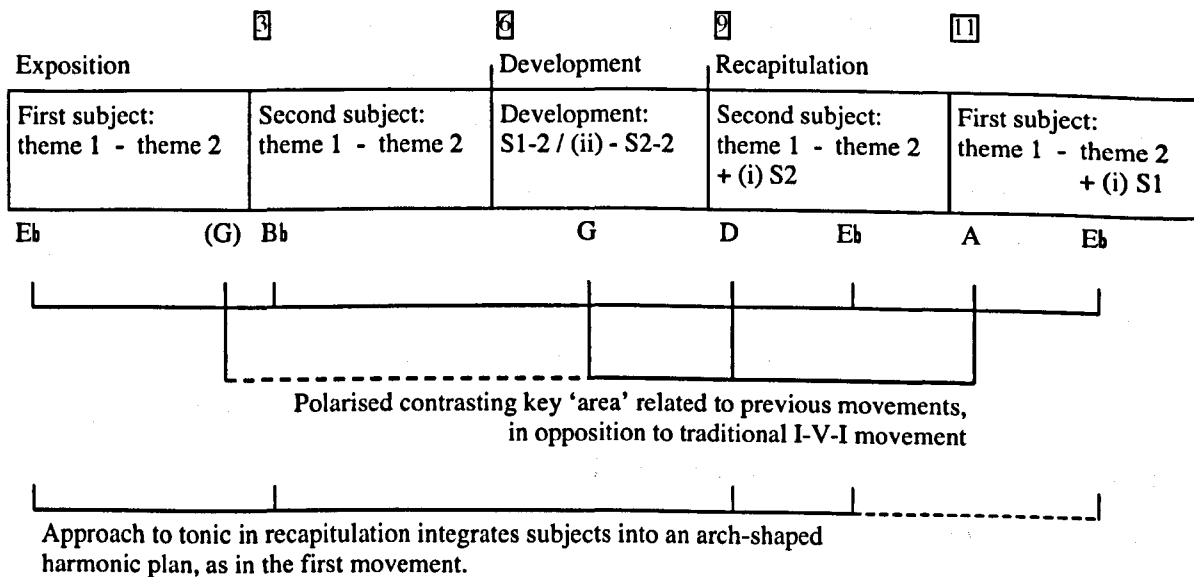


Fig. 12-3: Tonal plan of String Sextet finale

## 5 – Transitional Period, 1913-1916

After the successful but in many ways conservative *The Sea* and the somewhat retrospective Piano Quintet and String Sextet, a startling forward momentum can be observed in Bridge's development; it is certainly as remarkable as the period of stylistic transformation after 1920 (which is a logical development of earlier trends), but has received much less attention. Mature in their technical control, the works of this period are also forward-looking, in some ways even transitional (nowhere more so than in the second movement of the Cello Sonata), suggesting that Bridge was consciously attempting to expand his stylistic range, especially in terms of harmony. The two major chamber works of the period achieve a level of accomplishment not yet encountered, and many of the piano and orchestral works are also increasingly mature and searching: for instance *Dance Poem* (1913), *Three Poems* for piano (1914), *Summer*, and *Two Poems* for orchestra (both 1915). The recurring use of the title 'poem' is striking, suggesting that Bridge used the term to emphasise a particular aspect of his music. *Dance Poem* attempts to depict the emotions expressed by a dancer (rather than the dance itself), i.e. emotion moderated by dance, leading to a more creative and expressive approach to dance tropes; the *Three Poems* were originally envisaged as a set of four *Characteristic Pieces*, 'characteristic' and 'poetic' apparently having in common the exploration of a particular expressive character – *Summer* and each of the *Two Poems* have a similar focus. In this we can identify an engagement with expressive elements at times suggestive of impressionism and expressionism, the musical exploration of human experience (a vagueness of focus being an essential element of symbolism, which underpins both stylistic directions) legitimating an expansion of technical vocabulary for expressive purposes.<sup>1</sup> In the orchestral and piano works, the emotional range tends to be limited, allowing Bridge to explore individual aspects of his developing style (and their expressive implications) more or less in isolation. Many of these works thus seem like stages or fragments of a wider trend; the chamber music is in some ways less obviously forward-looking, its complex structures requiring a more measured approach, although the second movement of the Cello Sonata moves far beyond the romantic lyricism of the first.

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<sup>1</sup> See Stefan Jarocinski, *Debussy – Impressionism and Symbolism*, trans. Rollo Meyers (London: Eulenburg, 1976) for a detailed discussion of symbolism, impressionism and their relation to music.

While Bridge's musical language was developing, his earlier music was becoming better known, starting a lasting trend whereby approval for his early music contrasted with the criticism and incomprehension that met the increasingly complex later works.<sup>2</sup> His growing prominence as a composer was reflected in the publication of his music, particularly the major chamber works. By 1913, only a handful of substantial works had appeared, primarily as a result of his success in the Cobbett competitions, but, as Trevor Bray has noted:

during the next decade, 1913-23, the steadily increasing popularity of his compositions led Augener, Bridge's main publisher, not only to print several new works just after they had been composed, but also to publish the backlog of earlier works that had remained in manuscript. The *Novelletten* appeared in 1915, the First String Quartet the following year, with the revised versions of the Piano Quintet in 1919 and the Sextet in 1920.<sup>3</sup>

Publication of the orchestral music proceeded at a considerably slower pace, with *The Sea* being published in 1920. Due to the frequency with which the chamber music was performed throughout England in these years, Bridge's reputation as a composer rested primarily on that portion of his oeuvre; given the aesthetic of these works (most of them relatively early), it is not surprising that his subsequent development was met with dismay in some quarters.

The piano works of the period are notable for their exploration of a less stable harmonic idiom; they often seem somewhat experimental in character (much more so than the songs and short chamber works, which were evidently targeted at a less adventurous audience). This results in a distinct harmonic sound world in the piano music, regularly featuring strongly whole-tone sonorities and suggestions of polychordal harmony.<sup>4</sup> The Piano Sonata is the most substantial and radical outgrowth of this style, and Bridge did not produce much music for piano subsequently; what is significant is that the tone of the Sonata is strongly differentiated from the dainty, picturesque expression of the earlier short pieces, which present their harmonic experiments within accessible forms and vivid use of expressive tropes. Interestingly,

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<sup>2</sup> This ranges from hostile reviews of works from *Dance Poem* onwards to generalisations such as Frank Howes' oft-quoted assertion that Bridge 'began to uglify his music to keep it up to date' (*The English Musical Renaissance*, London: Secker and Warburg, 1966, 160). Reviews of many works are detailed and quoted in Bray, *Frank Bridge – A Life in Brief* and Hindmarsh, *Catalogue*.

<sup>3</sup> Bray, *Frank Bridge – A Life in Brief*.

<sup>4</sup> I will prefer the more neutral term 'polychordal' to 'bitonal' in my discussion of Bridge's later harmony.

the first of the *Two Poems* for orchestra strikingly appropriates a number of features found more usually in Bridge's piano music of the time, particularly the repetition of a small amount of material in the A sections, the contrasting harmonic character of the B section, and the use of the hexachord 6-34 in a primary harmonic role (see 'A Note on Bridge's Post-Tonal Harmonic Language' in the next chapter for a discussion of 6-34). The chamber music of the period seems comparatively conservative – perhaps indicating that Bridge was not yet sufficiently comfortable with the more radical elements of his developing harmonic language to incorporate them into the abstract and exacting formal requirements of a major chamber work.

There are a number of probable reasons for this distinction, all of which point to Bridge's unwillingness to produce a work of less than complete coherence, in any medium. Short piano pieces are a suitable format for self-contained experimentation on a conveniently small scale. In a larger work, particularly one incorporating several movements, the expressive and technical implications that are unproblematic in the context of a short 'character piece' need to be integrated into a larger and more abstract design, a far more complex proposition, and one that presented Bridge with evident challenges to be overcome. His difficulties in completing the Piano Sonata (documented in his correspondence) were thus not primarily due to the development of a 'new language' from which to create material, but the difficulty of constituting and arranging material in a satisfyingly logical way. Bridge's eventual solutions to such problems will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

Through the introduction of expressionistic elements, *Dance Poem* transforms Bridge's waltz style into something considerably more personal and mature, where conventional turns of phrase are integrated into a new expressive context, making for a more idiosyncratic harmonic language and melodic/phrase structure. References to such stylistic tropes in an increasingly personal sound world can be observed in much of Bridge's later music (particularly the orchestral works), relating to the surrounding material in different ways; the relationships thus created act as a sort of commentary on the stylistic references and affect their identity. A nostalgic element in particular is often in evidence, which may be related to a more practical consideration: as 'public' works, the orchestral music is made more accessible through the inclusion of easily grasped stylistic signposts. There is an inherently nostalgic element in such a process, as more conventional tropes are thrown into relief against (or transformed by) more 'difficult' elements.

Bridge's wife Ethel appears to have disliked *Dance Poem* – a private rehearsal of the work at the home of Edward Speyer (a wealthy patron of chamber music and friend of Bridge's) shortly before the premiere 'was enough to deaden all [Ethel's] desire to hear any two consecutive notes of it again'.<sup>5</sup> Apart from the work's comparatively modern idiom, it is possible that the *Dance Poem* in particular provoked her (and the critics') distaste because of the unprecedented sensuality of the music – still a very contentious issue in English music in 1914. Apart from the more adventurous harmonic language, texture and timbre are important elements of this aspect: already the opening gesture may have caused disapproval in some quarters.<sup>6</sup> Here, surely, is another instance of continental influence: both recent French music and works by expressionists such as Schoenberg and Strauss had contained explicit sensual elements, their influence beginning to impinge on Bridge's previous Victorian propriety (or *naïveté*), particularly in the orchestral music and its possibilities for colourful effect. Where impressionism commodifies the pleasurable experience (i.e. idyll), expressionism pursues a more complex psychological undercurrent, a more philosophical exploration of the uncertainty beyond the sensually pleasurable environment. Daniel Albright suggests that 'Expressionism ... is distilled and internalized Impressionism', the process of internalisation allowing it to explore less stable emotional states.<sup>7</sup> In *Dance Poem* this results in an unusually direct and probing type of sensuality (something Ethel may well have objected to), the development of his 'public' orchestral style thus taking a rather unexpected turn, and one which had lasting repercussions for his orchestral style. Is there an element of moral censure in the *Musical Times* critic's comment that 'the friends of the composer will hope that he will revert to the style in which he has distinguished himself'?<sup>8</sup> A general moral suspicion of modernism is not surprising, given that (in the words of David Metzger)

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<sup>5</sup> Letter to Speyer, 10 March 1914.

<sup>6</sup> See Karen Painter, 'The Sensuality of Timbre: Responses to Mahler and Modernity at the "Fin de siècle"', *19th Century Music* 18/3 (Spring 1995) for a discussion of this matter.

<sup>7</sup> Albright (ed.), *Modernism and Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 259. The misunderstanding of expressionism as an opposite to impressionism is encapsulated by Randolph Schwabe's definition of the former as 'an insistence on feeling rather than on the visualisation and reproduction of the external world', the 'attitude of Impressionism' being 'one of passivity before nature' (Randolph Schwabe, 'Expressionism', *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 33/187, October 1918, 140). This stems from the misunderstanding of impressionism as a representation of nature itself rather than the experience or perception of nature, and an inability to grasp the similarity of technical and aesthetic procedures and aims.

<sup>8</sup> 'London Concerts', *The Musical Times*, 55/854 (April 1914), 256-7.

Modernism challenged Victorianism not with a uniform cultural stance but with a vast and often contradictory array of beliefs, perspectives, and aesthetics. As [Daniel] Singal points out, one of the dominant impulses of the culture was to assault the Victorian conception of inviolable truths. In lieu of such tenets, modernism accepted moral uncertainty and irrationality and openly examined all aspects of human behavior, including the sexual.<sup>9</sup>

The development of Bridge's style in these directions points towards a number of likely influences, such as recent music by Debussy and Scriabin, and Bridge's hope that *Dance Poem* might be taken up by Diaghilev and the Russian Ballet suggests a possible influence from that quarter, Gareth Thomas noting that Diaghilev encouraged 'ballet themes, costumes and choreography of an explicitly sexual nature'.<sup>10</sup> Bridge certainly seems to have taken a lively interest in developments in European music of the period, although it is interesting to note that Debussy's closely contemporary 'danced poem' ('poème dansé') for the Russian Ballet, *Jeux*, cannot have been an influence – Bridge's work was sketched between January and March 1913, while *Jeux* was premiered on May 15 in Paris (and due to an unenthusiastic reception did not become widely known for some time).

The descriptive and expressive elements in Bridge's music are thus enriched and complicated through a variety of modern influences. There is a considerable quantity of descriptive piano music from the decade 1915-1925, related to the romantic character piece, but increasingly incorporating unconventional harmonic features, often using chromatic voice-leading and placing familiar chords in unconventional harmonic contexts. Impressionism gave composers the opportunity to attempt what Constant Lambert described as a 'departure from the norm [which] results in [painting and music] losing their respective conventional qualities'.<sup>11</sup> A.R. Fulton describes expressionism in a similar way: '[it] is the result of the artist's attempt to express himself more intensely than his medium permits'.<sup>12</sup> In differing ways, then, the two

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<sup>9</sup> David Metzger, 'The New York Reception of "Pierrot lunaire"', 675. See also Painter, 'The Sensuality of Timbre', for a discussion of the reception of modernism as degeneracy.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas, 'The Impact of Russian Music in England 1893-1929', 56. Bridge's titles for the sections have distinctly sensual undertones: 'The Dancer', 'Allurement', 'Tenderness', 'Abandon', 'Problem' and 'Disillusion'.

<sup>11</sup> Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!*, third edition (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1948), 16. It is significant that composers and painters used opposite means to achieve this 'loss of conventional qualities' – whereas depiction became less precise in painting, in music it was prioritised – emphasising the fundamentally abstract nature of musical material.

<sup>12</sup> A.R. Fulton, 'Expressionism: Twenty Years After', *The Sewanee Review*, 52/3 (Summer 1944), 400.



movements encouraged radical manipulations of technical and stylistic elements, whose effect is directly related to symbolism – a manipulation of conventional material to imply a meaning not expressible in conventional terms. The emotional implications of expressionism, and relevant assumptions about ‘healthy’ or ‘unhealthy’ expression in music, made this influence more difficult for composers and audiences to deal with, and Bridge’s engagement with expressionism reveals a strength of artistic vision sometimes felt to be lacking in his earlier music.

If by the end of this period he had explored and assimilated many aspects of impressionism, the expressionist influence is only fully accepted in the Third String Quartet. Particulars of Bridge’s familiarity with works by progressive composers such as Schoenberg and Scriabin are more difficult to trace than in the case of Debussy or Ravel, since (in the words of Trevor Bray)

the programmes [of the English String Quartet] were basically of the classics, with surprisingly few modern works performed considering the rapidly expanding horizon of Bridge’s musical interests. The Quartet gave further performances of the Debussy and Ravel quartets and also Ravel’s *Introduction and Allegro*, but there was nothing more radical from Schoenberg’s output than *Verklärte Nacht* (1899). Goossen’s *Two Sketches* (1916) and Bridge’s own Second String Quartet and *Sir Roger de Coverley* were the only other contemporary works.<sup>13</sup>

While his aesthetic horizons were gradually expanding, the growing modernist aesthetic was more obvious in some instances than others, and some that introduced modern elements less obviously than *Dance Poem*, for instance *Summer*, were more favourably received, although from the point of view of Bridge’s developing style, *Summer* is in many ways as radical as the earlier work. In its textures, harmonic rhythm and function, and expansive tone it relates strongly to impressionism (specifically English impressionism) and departs significantly from Bridge’s usual habits. Through its association with musical idealisation of the English landscape, impressionism related more directly to a ‘healthy’ nationalist agenda than expressionistic elements.<sup>14</sup> In some ways the commodification of Nature in impressionism might be seen to be in tune with the prevailing democratisation of the countryside, and Bridge’s attitude, with his

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<sup>13</sup> Bray, *Frank Bridge – A Life in Brief*.

<sup>14</sup> Similar issues were relevant in other arts – see, for instance, Ysanne Holt, ‘Nature and Nostalgia: Philip Wilson Steer and Edwardian landscapes’, *Oxford Art Journal* 19/2 (1996).

suburban aspirations and enthusiasm for sightseeing, as relating directly to wider social trends.<sup>15</sup> If this attitude made itself felt in some way in the gentle, accessible impressionism of *Summer*, it is not surprising that it was met with more immediate approval than the more searching works.

The first of the *Two Poems* for orchestra demonstrates Bridge's expanding harmonic language, especially in the widespread use of 6-34 in the A sections. Scriabin used this chord prominently (as did Debussy and Berg, although it seems unlikely that the latter would have been an influence at this stage), and even though Bridge's approach to harmony contrasts significantly with Scriabin's in many specifics, a more general influence seems very likely. That said, 6-34 and a number of similar chords (most significantly the ambiguous whole-tone dominant) can already be observed in the Piano Quintet, including the original version. In both the Piano Quintet and the first of the *Two Poems*, Bridge's treatment of the chord has direct parallels with his often unorthodox treatment of augmented sixth chords, suggesting that the significance of personal experimentation should not be underestimated compared to apparent external influences. While some gestures and harmonic elements (particularly in the piano music) point towards Debussy and Scriabin, it is important to recognise that the logic of their application in the late music is entirely personal. The first of the *Two Poems* marks an important departure in Bridge's music, avoiding a tonal conclusion in favour of a reiteration of 6-34, which defines the harmony of the movement's A sections. A conclusion on the entire six-note collection, rather than the B $\flat$  major chord contained within it (and implied to be the harmonic centre by the key signature), suggests that the set, not a key, is the basis of the harmonic language, representing a significant departure from harmonic convention. Relationships between recurring sets and prioritised pitches become increasingly complex in the later post-tonal music.

The *Three Poems* for piano further suggest an expanding harmonic horizon, and the influence of Debussy is plain. As in the later *A Fairy Tale*, the style mainly recalls Debussy's earlier piano music; the influence of later works such as the Preludes is felt more strongly in *The Hour Glass* (1919-20), suggesting that the music of Debussy continued to act as an influence on Bridge's stylistic expansion. Apart from Scriabin, Ravel and Fauré's later music may also have had an impact. Bridge's interest in modern

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<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of perceptions of 'Englishness' and their relation to socio-political issues, see Peter Mandler, 'Against "Englishness": English Culture and the Limits to Rural Nostalgia, 1850-1940', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, Vol. 7 (1997).

music was already evident in his enthusiasm for the string quartets of Debussy and Ravel at a time when they were not yet generally known in England.<sup>16</sup> The works produced after the revisions of 1912 suggest that, despite the superficial conservatism of much of his music up to that point, Bridge was fascinated by the possibilities afforded by more modern styles, and after works such as *Dance Poem*, the first of the *Two Poems*, and the *Four Characteristic Pieces* (1917) and *The Hour Glass* for piano, the subsequent radical stylistic expansion is not all that surprising. His willingness to explore new directions was simply more thoroughgoing and lasting than that of contemporaries such as Ireland, Bax and Bliss.

His exploration of new styles also prompted a change in his working methods – until 1913 Bridge had generally worked on one major composition at a time, but subsequently dates of compositions often overlap, with significant interruptions, sometimes between movements, sometimes between the completion of a sketch and preparation of the score; notable examples include the Cello Sonata, *Summer*, *A Prayer*, the Piano Sonata, *Enter Spring* and *The Christmas Rose*.<sup>17</sup> Longer gestation and working-out periods reflect Bridge's painstaking approach to the exploration of his developing musical language. In 1922 Ethel reported him as saying 'I find it so much harder to work now than 20 years ago because I discard nearly everything.'<sup>18</sup> At that time he was working on the Piano Sonata, his first large-scale work in a post-tonal idiom, and one which caused him considerable difficulty, as he noted frequently in his correspondence, for instance complaining to Marjorie Fass: 'not two bars of anything in two weeks of hours and hours of thought. I am black in the face with it.'<sup>19</sup>

The Second String Quartet was his last major work for some time to be written in one stretch. Although it is comparatively conservative in idiom, there are occasional flashes of more advanced harmonic elements. In other respects the Quartet is a summation of how far Bridge's tonal idiom could be developed before the 'breaking point' represented by the second movement of the Cello Sonata, the first of the *Two Poems*, and piano works such as *The Hour Glass*.

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<sup>16</sup> He played them with various quartets, which, according to Edward Speyer, 'by reason of his great qualities as a musician, he dominated and guided'. *My Life and Friends* (London: Cobden-Sanderson, 1937), 221.

<sup>17</sup> See 'List of Works Discussed in Thesis' or Hindmarsh's *Catalogue* for dates of composition.

<sup>18</sup> Letter to Fass, 29 May 1923.

<sup>19</sup> Letter to Fass, 20 May 1922.

## String Quartet No. 2 in G minor

(i) *Allegro ben moderato*

(ii) *Allegro vivo*

(iii) *Molto adagio – Allegro vivace*

Like the First String Quartet, the Second was produced for a competition – Cobbett's fourth chamber music competition, for string quartet 'in Sonata, Suite or Phantasy form'.<sup>20</sup> Although composition was not as hurried as with the First Quartet (the manuscript specifies 'Summer 1914 – March 30th 1915': between the sketching and scoring of *Summer*), Bridge had to submit the work as a late entry. Like the First Quartet, the Second was both successful in the competition (winning first prize in the 'sonata' category) and marked a new level of maturity in Bridge's output, combining the experience gained in writing the Phantasies, String Sextet and revised Piano Quintet, and reaping the benefits of Bridge's expanding style (Anthony Payne describes it as 'Bridge's first undoubted chamber masterpiece').<sup>21</sup> Phrase structure, melodic writing and harmony are fluid, and the equality of parts presages the later chamber music (encouraged by Cobbett's specification for 'two violin parts ... of equal importance and interest'), leading to a wide range of textural variation, the influence of the Debussy and Ravel quartets now having been fully assimilated.<sup>22</sup> The resulting fluidity of texture and phrase structure moves away from the conventional construction of earlier material, preparing for the fragmentation of the more expressionistic principal material in later works.

The Second String Quartet again breaks new ground in terms of harmony, texture and thematic/motivic treatment. The freedom with which Bridge manipulates the motivic content of his (usually) two-bar sub-phrases results in a greater fluency than that found in the more rigid themes of the earlier chamber music. The inner movement of the recent String Sextet is an important antecedent, a further similarity being the clear statement of the tonic at the outset (and again at the beginning of the transition) followed by multiple chromatic diversions, most often through the use of sequence. In

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<sup>20</sup> Musical Times, 'Occasional Notes', 55/855 (May 1914), 305. The third competition, for which Bridge did not produce an entry, was held in 1909, for Violin Sonata (the winning entry was John Ireland's Violin Sonata No. 1).

<sup>21</sup> Payne, *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, 41.

<sup>22</sup> Musical Times, 'Occasional Notes'.

this respect the Second String Quartet differs considerably from the First, where the tonic was continually implied while being carefully avoided. The first bar is emblematic – an emphatic tonic chord followed by an immediate diversion (Ex. 13-1a). Most of the remaining first subject material derives from this phrase, particularly motifs *a* and *b*, which are developed throughout the first subject and transition. Bars 7-10 are emblematic (Ex. 13-1b), *b* being developed and expanded, before *x* is related to both *a* and *b*: to *b* through the descending fourth observed in the previous expanded version and to *a* through its placement (after *b*) and interval structure (leap and a step). This is immediately developed further in the second violin part, as given in the example, and continued development follows, including in the transition (cf. Ex. 13-2; I have marked all instances ‘*x*’, as the resemblance of this pervasive motivic element to *a* and *b* is variable). A striking resemblance to the opening of Grieg’s G minor String Quartet is evident, and there are further similarities as the piece progresses, notably the reappearance of second subject material as an introduction to the finale.

Allegro ben moderato

*f* *espress.* *mf* *p*

*a* *b* *a*

Ex. 13-1a: String Quartet No. 2, first movement, bars 1 - 4

*[b]* *[b]* *x* *x*

vn. 1 vn. 2

Ex. 13-1b: String Quartet No. 2, first movement, violins, bars 7 - 10

As in the Phantasy Piano Trio and String Sextet, the transition (Ex. 13-2) creates contrast between the restrained first and second subject themes. The affirmative opening

Ex. 13-2: String Quartet No. 2, first movement, bars 27 - 30

of the transition is short-lived, however; harmony is progressively deflected and motifs *a* and *b* are transformed and developed throughout the section, while the texture and thematic material of the second subject are prefigured in its latter stages (Ⓔ<sup>3</sup>). The arrival of the second subject is signalled primarily through the harmonic progression, the key of the second subject (B $\flat$  major) not being approached directly. It is instead reached by chromatic movement of parts from a B dominant ninth chord (Ex. 13-3); interpreted as an unusual sort of German sixth, this progression is similar to several already observed in earlier works. Its use here is, however, especially effective: in a traditional augmented sixth progression, B $\flat$  would be the dominant to a tonic E $\flat$ . This suggestion of a dominant identity gives the tonicised B $\flat$  an increased sense of harmonic tension, imbuing one of Bridge's favourite local harmonic progressions with structural significance. This is emphasised by the use of the German sixth, which has less of a dominant character than the French sixth (which would be identical with a flattened-fifth dominant to B $\flat$  [F-A-B-E $\flat$ ]; in the German sixth the dominant note, F, is replaced by F $\sharp$ ). The second subject is more conventional in construction than the first, being more harmonically stable and consisting of a series of characteristic counterstatements. Its character is, however, distinctly impressionistic and pastoral, its texture relating directly to *Summer* (as well as parts of the First String Quartet and first *Idyll*), making this a particularly hazy idyll to which to retreat from the unsettled principal material. The second subject leads directly to a subdued opening of the development, marked by a return of first subject material (Ⓒ). Second subject material is soon reintroduced, however, and increasing intensity and dynamic level builds towards a *forte con*

Ex. 13-3: String Quartet No. 2, first movement, bars 48 - 53

*passione* version of the second subject in B minor (combined with a brief reference to the first subject in the third and fourth bars).

The intensity of this B minor section is enhanced by its textural complexity, with instrumental parts of considerable difficulty and imitative violin parts (Ex. 13-4), as well as the choice of key, unusually (for Bridge) drawing the 'redemptive' second subject into the minor mode. This procedure emphasises the B minor section's position as the expression of tension accumulated over the course of the previous lyrical material. The intensity of the B minor statement discharges into the explosive return of transition material, its identity as a 'strong' gesture momentarily releasing the tension previously accrued. This subsides naturally into the opening of the recapitulation. The modality of the B minor harmony (Aeolian – a feature which is resumed in the second movement), meanwhile, relates it strongly to D major, in a sense providing an alternative secondary key area of increased harmonic tension for the second subject. Combined with the absorption of the subject into the minor mode, this makes for an emphatic release of tension on its return in the recapitulation. The temporary

Ex. 13-4: String Quartet No. 2, first movement, bars 105 - 106

disturbance of the second subject's idyll, meanwhile, prepares for its transcendence in the more realistic optimism of the finale.

The first subject recapitulation and tonic are approached obliquely, overlapping with the end of the development, the introduction of the melody in the cello part helping to obscure the key ( $[14]^{-1}$ ). Further developmental treatment of the first subject links with the last part of the transition ( $[16]$ , cf.  $[5]$ ), leading to the second subject in G major. Significantly, that key is afforded careful dominant preparation, contrasting with the remoteness created by the abrupt progression to B $\flat$  in the exposition. The sense of resolution thus achieved at the outset of the second subject recapitulation is enhanced by the lack of tonic emphasis in the previous (first subject) section – not as harmonically remote as Bridge's false recapitulations or hybrid arch-forms, but sufficiently short and chromatic to give the second subject an added sense of comparative stability, while also setting up an ultimate return to the tonic minor and first subject material at the end of the movement.

The way in which this return is achieved is reminiscent of the revised Piano Quintet, although here the necessity of returning to the tonic minor is more convincingly engineered. Transition material is suddenly and dramatically reintroduced ( $[20]$ ), building considerable tension before the resigned concluding appearance of the first subject, its flattened seventh and plagal-inflected chromatic approach to the tonic making for a subdued final gesture. As at the end of the development, the quasi-expressionistic violence of the transition material is revealed in an outburst that cannot materially alter the fundamental dynamic – the release of tension is presented as a



temporary solution only. The 'strength' (i.e. virility) of the material is thus ultimately impotent. In the structuring of this dynamic, with both subjects building to considerable climaxes at the end of development and recapitulation, there is a creative engagement with and technical disciplining of expressionist elements that far transcends the melodrama of the First String Quartet and Phantasies.

The complex interplay of dramatic and lyrical elements (with their traditional associations of 'masculine'/'feminine' and 'tragic'/'redemptive') is particularly effective, contrasting with the blunt and forceful exploitation of expressive tropes in the First Quartet. Not only does the B minor section in the development suggest a more complex approach to the role of second subject material, it also initiates the gradual approach, via the keys of the ensuing scherzo (B minor and D major) and the slow introduction to the finale (E major), to the affirmative and stabilising G major finale. Thus the 'disruptive' and 'alienated' developmental B minor statement ultimately contributes to a process of stabilisation, contrasting with the 'escapist' second subjects and inner movements of the First String Quartet, which are ultimately unsuccessful in establishing a redemptive conclusion. Unlike its counterpart in the First Quartet, then, the B minor scherzo, with its modal flattened seventh always pointing towards the D major of the trio, contributes to the logic of the overall structural (and emotional) trajectory. That this process is related to the problematising of the second subject in the first movement suggests a highly unusual application of the 'redemptive' structural paradigm.

The scherzo follows an established pattern, relying heavily on a single motif (Ex. 13-5a gives the opening of the short introduction, which features the principal motif in both inversions [y], which correspond to the two versions of *a* given in the opening bars of the first movement, cf. Ex. 13-1; Ex. 13-5b gives the beginning of the main theme). A more sustained melody (Ex. 13-6) is introduced subsequently, initially heard in the cello and viola parts, the violins proceeding with overlapping statements in rhythmic diminution. The principal motif then serves as the starting point for a climactic theme (7), resulting in a familiar ternary construction. The transition to the trio is reminiscent of the transition section of the previous movement, where harmony is deflected briefly to make the relative major (the key of the trio) sound more remote. The transition seems to develop or derive the material of the trio from scherzo motifs, reorganising the interval pattern of the main scherzo motif (from 3-1-1-4 to 3-4-1, and thereby

**Allegro vivo**

Ex. 13-5a: String Quartet No. 2, second movement, bar 1

**Non troppo vivo**

Ex. 13-5b: String Quartet No. 2, second movement, bars 9 - 12

Ex. 13-6: String Quartet No. 2, second movement, cello, bars 25 - 28

continuing to relate to *a*) to form the opening of the trio theme (*y*<sub>2</sub> in Ex. 13-7, cf. *y* in Ex. 13-5); this is followed by an auxiliary note figure originally derived from the violin accompaniment to the scherzo motif (*z*<sub>2</sub>, cf. *z* in Ex. 13-5b). The thematic process, made explicit by the transition and described by Bryan Wade as ‘self-evolutionary’, combines with the thematic and motivic economy of the sections themselves, resulting in a rigorous integration of material that builds on works such as the Phantasies and String Sextet.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Wade, ‘The Four String Quartets of Frank Bridge’, 224.

As so often, the trio relies on a single theme (Ex. 13-7), whose two contrasting phrases provide the entire material of the section. Unlike the remote progressions used to approach D major, B minor is simply reintroduced from that key without dominant preparation, prefigured by the reintroduction of the scherzo's principal triplet motif. The only full dominant chord of the movement occurs in the penultimate bar, the flattened seventh, A, otherwise being preferred (a fact emphasised by its prominence as the first note of the principal motif, and relating directly to the first subject of the first movement, principally through *a* as it appears in bar 4 [cf. Ex. 13-3] and at the end of the movement, as well as emphasising the kinship of *a* and *y*). The sense of equality thus created between tonic and relative major further strengthens the connections with the B minor section of the previous movement and the key of the next. The resulting relationships create a secondary tonal axis (B minor/D major – [E major] – G major) in opposition to the original tonic key of G minor. Following the trio, a varied repeat of the

Ex. 13-7: String Quartet No. 2, second movement, bars 78 - 86

scherzo leads, as noted, to the movement's only perfect cadence in B minor, perhaps helping to prepare the subsequent introduction of E major.

The finale begins with a substantial slow introduction in E major, reusing the first movement's second subject (Ex. 13-8, cf. Ex. 13-3). While in the First Quartet the movement towards the tonic major is cancelled with devastating effect at the end of that work, in the Second the movement towards a major-mode finale is too forceful to allow a reversion to the original minor, resulting in Bridge's most organic and convincing 'redemptive' finale (in the romantic, Beethovenian sense). This is also aided by its positive tone, which, after the solemn introduction, is playful and active, leaving the barely restrained violence of the first movement far behind.

**Molto adagio**

Ex. 13-8:  
String Quartet No. 2,  
third movement,  
bars 1 - 8

The introduction acts almost as a short slow movement, providing contrast amid the three *Allegro* movements, while linking directly with the first; further references follow in the finale proper. The progression from E major to G major is effected through chromatic movement to a pedal on D, which is related to the prolonged dominant (B)

pedal during the first part of the introduction. This creates not only distance between the keys, but also a continued sense of harmonic relaxation by apparently tonicising the dominant, D, before moving to the tonic. The renewed transformation of the character of the first movement's second subject is striking – the impressionistic, fluctuating texture is replaced by meditative, almost hymn-like part-writing. There are similarities with earlier quartet textures, for instance the first Idyll and parts of the First Quartet (slow movement), and comparisons with more obviously meditative/spiritual music, such as some of the organ works and *A Prayer*, might also be relevant.<sup>24</sup> The treatment of this material, originally pastoral and escapist in character, then transformed into something more dramatic and questioning in the development of the first movement, curiously prepares for the change of mood in the main part of the finale. The introduction signals that we have moved beyond the concerns of the first movement, and the playful optimism of the finale proper is maximally effective after the serious and contemplative introduction, its remoteness serving to distance the finale from the scherzo while enabling a renewed, productive engagement with the tensions presented in the first movement. The rest of the finale is largely pastoral in tone, relating to Bridge's intermezzo style as exemplified by the intermezzi of the First String Quartet and Suite for Strings. Musical features of this style include the drone bass, the use of pizzicato and staccato figures, often featuring fourths. There are also references to the Mendelssohnian nocturnal pastoral, principally in the contrasting (i.e. second) phrase of the first subject's second theme (bars 5-8 of Ex. 13-9b). This delicate scherzando manner was a prominent stylistic reference in Bridge's early scherzi and is a precursor to the 'twilit' impressionism of later piano character pieces. The combination of these stylistic directions here suggests a form of escape that acknowledges a more pessimistic, unstable vision, but is capable of absorbing it to some degree. It is not an unconditional victory, but it establishes a viable resolution nonetheless. While there are technical similarities with the Cello Sonata, the effect in the later work is entirely different – an escape into nostalgia rather than a realistic 'coming to terms'.

The cello's linking D dominant pedal lasts for most of the first 28 bars of the *Allegro vivace*. A movement of considerable structural complexity, it shares many of the features of a typical sonata-arch, although it is in some ways more reminiscent of

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<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of a spiritual/religious preoccupation in Bridge's music and its relation to his response to the War (in *A Prayer*, *Blow Out*, *You Bugles* and *The Christmas Rose*), see Gillies, 'Frank Bridge's *Oration*'.

sonata-rondo. The first subject consists of two distinct themes, both of which are comprised of periods with two contrasting phrases; the first theme (Ex. 13-9a) is motivically linked to the principal motif of the scherzo (the opening bar reuses the 3-1-4

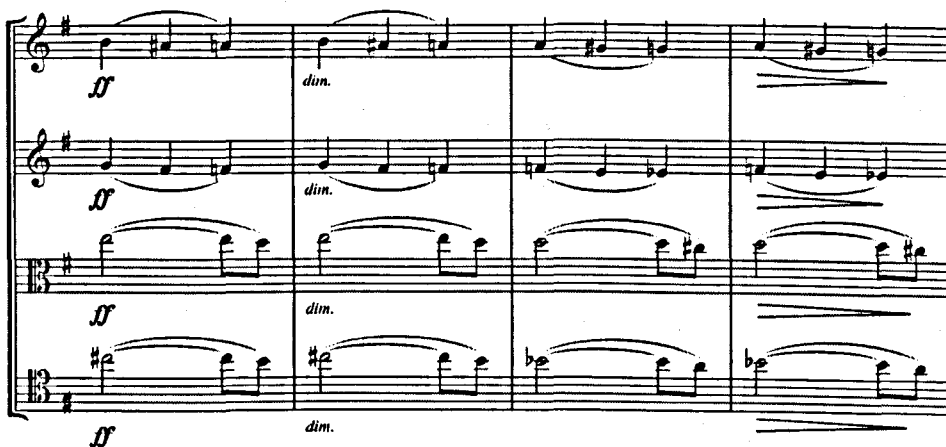
**Allegro vivace**

Ex. 13-9a: String Quartet No. 2, third movement, bars 27 - 32

Ex. 13-9b:  
String Quartet No. 2,  
third movement,  
bars 63 - 70



Ex. 13-10a: String Quartet No. 2, third movement, second violin, bars 87 - 91



Ex. 13-10b: String Quartet No. 2, third movement, bars 107 - 110

interval pattern, which permeates the theme). The first tonic (G major) chord is reached at the outset of the second theme (i.e. the second part of the first subject, Ex. 13-9b), whose second phrase (bars 5-8) creates harmonic diversion between statements of the more stable first phrase. The departure from the tonic towards E $\flat$  major leads to continued chromaticism as material recalling both subjects of the first movement (c and d in Ex. 13-10a, cf. Ex. 13-3 and the first bar of Ex. 13-1), itself transitional in character, is followed by separate transition material (Ex. 13-10b). Bridge's standard device of introducing harmonic instability into major-mode material, the descending chromatic line, is again in evidence (there are particular similarities with the String Sextet). The first part of the exposition thus features a wide range of material: two distinct themes (the second of which itself consists of two strongly contrasting phrases), references to both subjects of the first movement, and transitional material.

The dominant key is reached at the outset of the second subject, suggesting duple rather than triple time (Ex. 13-11). As noted, this is directly related to material from the finale of the String Sextet, while the metric ambiguity of its presentation is reminiscent of the opening of the E minor String Quintet, similarly using rhythms suggesting duple time in a triple-time metre; as a result, the uncharacteristically strict four-bar phrases seem like a series of overlapping units of six minims each. The reappearance of first

subject, first theme material (12) marks the beginning of the 'development' (if such it is), combined with references to first movement material (for instance in the second violin part at 13<sup>5</sup>). The second theme and second subject are not used. Harmony is unstable, with an initial implied return to the tonic quickly deflected. Several factors point to sonata-rondo construction here – the implied return to the tonic and concentration on first subject material in particular suggest the return of a rondo theme rather than a development section. The fact that material is not really developed, but rather harmonically and texturally varied and combined, supports such an interpretation. Second subject material is reintroduced in F major rather than the tonic, which is regained in a counterstatement; the resulting progression relates to earlier arch-forms, most recently the finale of the String Sextet.

Ex. 13-11: String Quartet No. 2,  
third movement, bars 115 - 122

In the subsequent return of the first subject/rondo theme, the order of material is reversed, beginning with references to the first movement, again transitional in character and deflecting harmony from the tonic. The transformation of originally stable





theme balances this progression, by introducing the first tonic chord in the exposition but digressing harmonically in the recapitulation; it only reappears after the tonic has been resolutely reinstated. References to the first movement, meanwhile, tend to be transitional in nature, avoiding tonic harmony and again suggesting that the concerns of the first movement have been left behind. In its transitional garb, tension created by dramatic statements of first movement material can be easily swept aside (for instance at [17] and [20]); the effect is to remind us what we *have* escaped from, and can now contemplate without unease, rather than what we *are* escaping from and must yet return to (as in comparable references in the slow movements of the Piano Quintet and First String Quartet). The role of the scherzo in this process would appear to be essential, its motivic and harmonic material preparing for the reconciliatory finale. Its determined tone is also significant, escaping the uneasy tension of the first movement and pointing towards the 'rustic', pastoral character of the most stable elements of the finale, and there are similarities here with the much later Second Piano Trio and Fourth String Quartet.

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## Cello Sonata

(i) *Allegro ben moderato*

(ii) *Adagio ma non troppo – Andante con moto – Molto allegro e agitato – Tempo I*  
*– Allegro moderato*

According to the dates Bridge added to the manuscript, the Cello Sonata was begun in 1913, but not completed until 1917. Hindmarsh notes that

It is clear from the chronology of his other major works between 1913 and 1917 that he worked intermittently on his two-movement sonata. The only extended periods in which he had the opportunity for sustained creative effort were between the composition of the *Dance Poem* and the sketch of *Summer*, July 1913 to June 1914, and after the completion of the short score of *A Prayer* in March 1916.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Hindmarsh, *Thematic Catalogue*, 97.

The movements of the sonata provide something of an aesthetic and stylistic contrast, probably due in no small part to this chronology, with a lyrical first movement followed by a more harmonically ambiguous and complex second. It appears that Bridge had originally envisaged a sonata in four movements, including a slow movement, an independent scherzo and a finale. As in the Piano Quintet (only recently revised when he started work on the Cello Sonata), he eventually decided to combine slow movement and scherzo, and instead of attempting to reconcile the dualities of style of the existing two movements in an independent finale, Bridge favoured a return of first movement material as a coda to the second. This emphasises the difference of style, indeed it transforms the aesthetic identity of the first movement in a retrospective process unique in Bridge's output.

It seems reasonable to suppose that the comparatively conventional first movement was largely conceived during the earlier period, while the second movement was the product of the later stage, a view (as noted by Hindmarsh) 'borne out, not only by the evidence of the musical style, but also by some recollections of the cellist Antonia Butler who gave the work's French premiere in 1928':

I first played the sonata with a contemporary pianist of [Bridge's] called Ada May Thomas ... She told me that during the First World War, when he was writing the slow movement, he was in utter despair over the futility of war and the state of the world generally and would walk round Kensington in the early hours of the morning unable to get any rest or sleep – and that the idea of the slow movement really came into being during that time.<sup>26</sup>

This statement also supports the idea that the First World War had an effect on Bridge's conspicuous stylistic development around this time, leading eventually to the radical language of the Piano Sonata and Third String Quartet, and the elegiac *Oration*. It should, however, be noted that the process of stylistic expansion culminating in these late works is firmly rooted in Bridge's earlier music, the outgrowth of a continuing engagement with modern music. It seems unlikely that Bridge's style would have developed in another direction under different circumstances, and the role of the war in accelerating this process should be treated with caution. Works such as *Dance Poem* and *Summer* reveal distinct modernist influences, which had been absorbed during

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<sup>26</sup> Hindmarsh, *Thematic Catalogue*, 97.

Bridge's exposure to and interest in new music during the previous decade. His subsequent espousal of an uncompromising modernist aesthetic in the 1920s follows on logically from both his interest in modern music and his earlier stylistic development.

If the war influenced the tone of his compositions, and hence perhaps his style more generally, its influence should not (as is often done) be overstated; Bridge was a modernist, more so than contemporaries such as Ireland and Bax, and (as it turned out) more so than William Walton and Arthur Bliss, whose modernist experiments after the War attained considerable notoriety. Bliss was deeply affected by the War – he was injured at the front and lost his brother Kennard – and his interest in modernism is revealed in his post-war compositions; but the tone of his music is considerably lighter and more experimental than Bridge's, while the elegiac *Morning Heroes* of 1929 is less adventurous than the earlier works. Perhaps it is the seriousness of Bridge's engagement with musical modernism (certainly the first of its kind and most uncompromising of its time in Britain) that is taken as a sign of trauma. While such an interpretation is convenient, it fails to take into account the musical logic and continuity of his maturation. A more relevant factor in this process was the patronage of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, which enabled Bridge to focus more exclusively on composition, also making the hostile critical reactions to his music (particularly in England) less significant an influence on his creativity.<sup>27</sup> After the modernist elements of works such as *Dance Poem*, *Summer*, the *Two Poems* for orchestra, the Cello Sonata and much of the piano music of this period, Bridge simply continued developing his style. Perhaps the war made his search for a more forward-looking, musically relevant form of expression seem more pressing, but it was the intervention of Coolidge that allowed him to pursue this process of musical self-discovery and self-realisation to its logical conclusion.

The Cello Sonata is Bridge's most consistently lyrical work, using continuous spans of sustained melodic material. The tone is far removed from the 'heroic'/dramatic Violin Sonata of 1904, but without challenging the conventional 'protagonist' role in the manner of the later Violin Sonata. The first subject (Ex. 14-1) is presented directly, first in the tonic (D minor), then in G minor. The piano motif *x* pervades the accompaniment, including a subsequent contrasting theme beginning in E minor (Ex. 14-2). A return to the original theme and the tonic leads to a substantial transition

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<sup>27</sup> Even *Enter Spring*, whose accessible style clearly has its intended Norwich audience in mind, was met with incomprehension in some quarters, see Hindmarsh, *Catalogue*, 135.

**Allegro ben moderato**

*p dolce e espress.*

*X*

*p*

*X*

*X*

*X*

*X*

*X*

*X*

Ex. 14-1: Cello Sonata, first movement, bars 1 - 9

*mf espress.*

*X*

*p*

*X*

*X*

*X*

*X*

Ex. 14-2: Cello Sonata, first movement, bars 29 - 36

*f poco agitato*

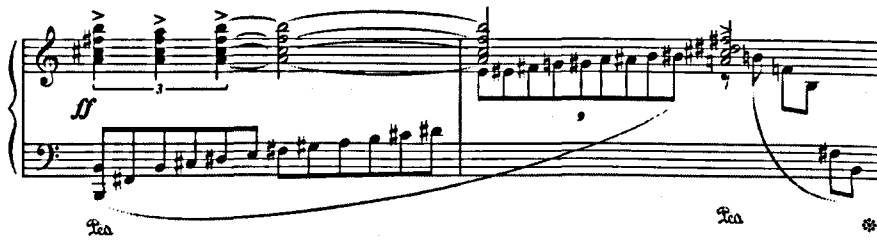
Ex. 14-3: Cello Sonata, first movement, piano, bars 53 - 54

Ex. 14-4: Cello Sonata, first movement, bars 104 - 108

section, introduced by the piano alone (Ex. 14-3), based on a version of motif x first observed in bar 13 (bar 6 of Ex. 14-6). The second subject appears in G $\flat$  major, again introduced by the piano. As the cello takes up the melody, the more conventional harmonic centre of F major is reached (Ex. 14-4). Both keys are introduced abruptly, and the resulting sense of harmonic alienation is similar to the corresponding section of the Second String Quartet.

Characteristically, the reintroduction of first subject material signals the beginning of the development (**[11]**), its fragmented presentation foreshadowing the beginning of the second movement. A return of transitional material and two themes derived from the first subject (Ex. 14-5) follow: (a) derives from the latter part of the contrasting theme (cf. bars 6-7 of Ex. 14-2), while the motivic basis of (b) first appears in the third bar (cf. Ex. 14-1). The effect of these derivations is interesting, interrupting the more obviously developmental processes of the first part of the development with more sustained lyricism. While this is climactic, it contrasts sharply with the corresponding part of the Second String Quartet, suggesting rapture rather than accumulating tension. The return of the second subject, in D major, follows on from this quite naturally. D major is approached through an interrupted progression from a C $\sharp$  dominant chord, creating an obvious harmonic arch: the effect is disorientating, linking the recapitulation closely

Ex. 14-5a: Cello Sonata, first movement, cello, bars 186 - 187



Ex. 14-5b: Cello Sonata, first movement, piano, bars 201 - 202

with the preceding development section, while also recalling the harmonic shifts used to approach the second subject in the exposition.

The return of the first subject is ingenious and striking, linking a dominant pedal with the ninth bar of the first subject (Ex. 14-6, cf. 14-1), thus also recalling the figure from which the transition material was derived (bar 6 of Ex. 14-6). This brief suggestion of D minor moves, as before, to G minor, followed by the contrasting theme (22), which is extended to include a reference to the derivation (Ex. 14-5a) used in the development (24). This is in D major, before a final move to the original tonic minor concludes the movement. The reorganisation of first subject material in the recapitulation allows the return to D minor to be delayed, further emphasising the arch-shaped arrangement, and the short reference to D major before the end of the movement creates a sense of equality between the tonic modes. This is facilitated by the approach to D minor and the first subject through the G minor counterstatement. Just as the harmonic movement is fluid, so is the treatment of thematic material, for instance in the placement of transitional and developmental derivations of principal material and the way in which they are brought into relation with each other. The ternary shape of the development (first subject material – transition material – first subject derivations) makes for an elaborately symmetrical and thematically integrated arch-form. The apparent wealth of lyrical melodic material is an illusion, ensuring both contrast and a sense of continuity, and the relationship of the transition material and developmental derivations to their thematic sources are carefully obscured – the transition theme derives from an accompaniment pattern, while both derivations used in the development reinterpret the phrase position of the melodic figures they grow out of, making the relationships less obvious.

*espress.* **Tempo I**

Ex. 14-6: Cello Sonata,  
first movement, bars 232 - 237

A complete transformation of aesthetic outlook is apparent at the outset of the second movement; three distinct themes are presented in succession (Ex. 14-7), becoming increasingly harmonically unstable. The material is still tonal, but a combination of chromaticism and the use of added degrees, chromatic appoggiaturas and non-functional progressions obscure a sense of stable tonality. The first section, while firmly rooted in F minor by a tonic pedal, nevertheless seems harmonically volatile, principally through the use of multiple appoggiaturas; the cello's interjections in particular are disorientating. A set of counterstatements of the first theme, moving sequentially from F minor through B $\flat$  minor to E $\flat$  minor, leads to the shorter second, apparently more stable theme (itself in two parts), although the use of parallel chords with added sevenths lends the beginning of the passage a Debussian sense of pan-tonality (3). The second part (4), characterised by chromatic voice leading (suggesting an alternation between major and minor modes) and strings of parallel fifths in the piano's treble register (both of which might also suggest a Debussian influence), leads shortly to the third theme (5). An abundance of fourths/fifths persists, now progressing more chromatically than before. The harmonic language of this three-part A section combines expressionistic chromaticism with features of Debussian harmony very convincingly. The themes, meanwhile, seem to follow one another naturally, with



Adagio ma non troppo

Ex. 14-7a: Cello Sonata, second movement, bars 1 - 10

Ex. 14-7b: Cello Sonata, second movement, bars 29 - 33

Ex. 14-7c: Cello Sonata, second movement, bars 48 - 51

similarities of rhythm and contour creating a sense of continuity. They do not sound like logical derivations, but a continuous, unfolding stream of melody.

The chromatic colouring of the material is suddenly cancelled by a short link, re-harmonising the melodic material of the first four bars of the movement, to a  $\frac{9}{8}$  *Andante con moto* section (Ex. 14-8), which is itself a transition to the scherzo. The effect is one of immense relaxation, a sensation emphasised by the overtly pastoral character of the transition theme, with its lilting compound-time melody, modal (Dorian) flavour and parallel triads over a bare fifth in the bass part. The progression of simple triads leading to the *Andante* theme relates to the previous use of parallel triads (and prepares for their use in the subsequent section) while emphatically ending the increasing harmonic complexity of the A section. In contrast to that harmonic shift, the sudden move (from B $\flat$  minor) to A minor, combined with an increase in tempo and activity, suggests an increase in tension appropriate to the scherzo middle section. The pastoral 'transition' thus provides a short period of respite and complete contrast between the chromatic A and B sections.

**Andante con moto**

The musical score for Ex. 14-8 is presented in two systems. The top system shows the cello line, which begins with a rest and then enters with a melodic line marked *pp teneramente*. The bottom system shows the piano accompaniment, consisting of parallel triads in the bass and a melodic line in the treble. The piano part is marked *pp* and *ppp*. The tempo is marked **Andante con moto**.

Ex. 14-8: Cello Sonata, second movement, bars 70 - 75

In the scherzo (Ex. 14-9), chromatic lines are again constantly in use, although the persistent presence of G $\sharp$  from the outset clearly establishes A minor as the tonal centre. The apparent F major orientation in the first six bars (interpreting the G $\sharp$  and B in the second bar as appoggiaturas to A and C) is quickly cancelled when B natural asserts itself more forcefully in bar 7. As in the first movement of the First String Quartet, the intrusion of the sixth degree of the scale and the deflection of harmony, whether by that note or chromatically, continually prevents the arrival at a tonic chord. The dominant is frequently present, but never reaches a perfect cadence. Even at the conclusion of the

scherzo closure is transient, with F intruding prominently in both parts, before A section material reappears in C major. The cello's melodic material throughout the scherzo again shares some similarity of rhythm and contour with that of the A section, continuing the tactic of unity within diversity.

**Molto allegro e agitato**

The musical score shows three measures of music. The first measure contains a triplet of eighth notes in the bass clef, marked *pp marcato*. The second measure features a melodic line in the bass clef, marked *a*. The third measure continues the melodic line, marked *cresc. molto*. The tempo is indicated as *Molto allegro e agitato*.

Ex. 14-9: Cello Sonata, second movement, bars 85 - 87

It is with the reintroduction of the third theme of the A section (in C major) that Bridge's formal strategy becomes apparent ([15]). As the relative major of A minor and the dominant of F minor, C major links the principal keys of the movement. The third theme, transition theme and second theme overlap, leading to the return of the first theme and F minor ([18]). In this way, Bridge creates an elaborate arch-form, in which the second and third themes are conflated. The first theme is considerably augmented, leading to a sustained and extended climactic statement beginning with the third (E $\flat$  minor) version of the principal phrase ([19]). The return of the transition theme confirms its function, not only as transitional but also as a temporary reprieve amid more dramatic material. The harmonic transition from F minor to D minor (initially, then moving to the major mode after seven bars) is dramatic, characteristically eliding the more obvious progression through F major.

The coda ([22]) – a return of the principal first movement theme – although it is notated in D major, more often refers to D minor and 'flat' key areas, tying it to preceding material, including the first movement; themes are fragmented and freely developed, recognisable but not simply recapitulated in familiar forms. The minor orientation makes the final cadence sound more like a *tierce de Picardie* than the

conclusion of a major-key section, relating to the uncertainty of mode in the first movement.

The coda, through its key and use of first movement material, extends an existing arch-form (the first movement) to encompass another (the second), in a sense changing our perception of the original structure; the style of the second movement affects our recollection of the first: after the experience of the second movement, the return of first movement material sounds like a reference to the past rather than a continuation in the present (despite the varied treatment of material). After the transition there is a sense that the past (i.e. the warmly lyrical material of the first movement) is viewed through the lens of the remote and hazy pastoral vision. How should we understand this retrospect – is it consoling or regretful? Whichever view one takes, the image is illusory and nostalgic, and like almost all of Bridge's idylls in their pure form, it is incapable of coming to terms with the painful reality it seeks to escape. The treatment of stable or stabilising elements is hence strongly nostalgic, and is emblematic of Bridge's attitude to stable tonality from this point onwards. While there are many references to tonality in his later music, the fundamental approach has changed, altering the role these tonal elements play – they are no longer essential in actively shaping and articulating structure in a conventional (functional) way, but a stylistic trope informing the character of certain material. The resulting 'emotional structures' are a direct outgrowth of the earlier (strongly romantic) characterisations of material as 'idyllic' or 'dramatic' and the tensions they generate. It is tempting to interpret the moments of (relative) tonal stability as symbols of an emotional innocence unsustainable in a post-war world, but they more directly represent a musical innocence that Bridge considered equally outmoded: his earlier style could no longer be used unselfconsciously, as it had become, in a sense, (musically) irrelevant – at this point Bridge had outgrown the aesthetic of traditional tonal expression, and references to the earlier style are inherently nostalgic.

Perhaps more significantly, there is a subtle element of nostalgia in Bridge's retention of traditional structural outlines and relationships in which to couch his unconventional material, if only in terms of a desire for order and logic. This is not to suggest that Bridge was conservative after all, or that a fundamental incongruity of form and content lies at the heart of his modernist works; rather it highlights his technical orientation, seeking not simply to present new discoveries, but to shape them into substantial and musically meaningful forms. The elaborate and individual structures developed in the mature chamber music were instrumental in allowing Bridge to realise

this aim. The manipulation of traditional concepts of musical logic and their forms results in tensions with the expressive content, which can be used productively to strengthen structure and effect.

With its ingenious thematic relationships, use of overlapping arch-forms, local harmonic procedures (for instance in the scherzo) and overriding relationships between tonal areas, the Cello Sonata uses the full range of Bridge's technique in order to move into new territory. The Second String Quartet and Cello Sonata not only epitomise Bridge's arrival at full technical maturity, also formulating a highly personal tonal style, but simultaneously demonstrate his continuing development. It is important to understand the next stage of this development as part of a continuous process rather than the sudden, radical change it has sometimes been made out to be. Extraneous influences such as the War and personal circumstances (for instance bitterness over his rejection by the musical establishment, exemplified by his failure to secure a regular conducting post) have been put forward as possible factors in encouraging the development of a less accessible idiom; while these may have provided further impetus to change his style as the world around him and his view of it changed, they are secondary compared to the purely musical logic of his development. The seeds of this development are to be found in Bridge's personality, accepting of change and progress and willing to explore its implications, rather than in external influences.

## 6 – Progressive Works, 1927-1932

Ten years elapsed between the composition of the Cello Sonata and the Third String Quartet, the longest period in Bridge's career during which no substantial chamber music was produced. That said, he completed only one large-scale work in any medium in the interim: the Piano Sonata of 1924. He had sketched a substantial portion of his opera *The Christmas Rose* in 1919, and works such as *The Hour Glass*, *In Autumn* and the three Tagore songs must also have taken some effort.<sup>1</sup> The Third Quartet occupied Bridge from early 1925 onwards, and the first version was completed in February 1926, after which he made several revisions, while also working on *Enter Spring* and *There is a willow grows aslant a brook*. The uncompromising idiom of the Sonata, and earlier forays such as the piano suite *The Hour Glass*, necessitated a painstakingly slow process of composition, as Bridge grappled with the implications of his developing musical language. The seriousness of his intentions is signalled in his declaration in 1923 that 'I have one big desire and that is to give my musical faculty full rein to create ... I am determined to get my mind cleared of all obstacles'.<sup>2</sup>

The completion, in 1927, of *There is a willow grows aslant a brook*, *Enter Spring* and the Third String Quartet, followed by the Trio Rhapsody in March 1928 and the Second Piano Trio the following year, suggest that Bridge was finding it easier to work with the post-tonal idiom he had developed; the Piano Trio, for instance, was completed in a fraction of the time it had taken to wrestle either the Piano Sonata or Third Quartet into shape. Bridge's idiom is most radical in the chamber works – the style of *Enter Spring* clearly keeps its intended audience in mind (the work was a commission for the Norwich Festival), relating to the 'public' manner of the earlier orchestral music. The retention of conventional tropes such as waltz and march rhythms (albeit with considerably altered stylistic elements) make much of the orchestral music seem less abstract. As before, it is this portion of his output that sounds the most English, and there are some suggestions of contemporary British influences, particularly that of Holst, for instance in the tolling processional music in *Enter Spring* and *The Christmas Rose*, as well as echoes of Walton in *Oration*, although Bridge does not appear to have

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<sup>1</sup> *In Autumn*, incidentally, is particularly emblematic of the dissolution of tonal elements in Bridge's music, moving between suggestions of tonality and sections of chromatic freedom; might the tonal dissolution at the end (into 6-34, the pervasive set of the first of the *Two Poems*, also featuring prominently in the Third String Quartet and later works) symbolise the onset of winter?

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 7 December 1923.

admired Walton's music particularly. The suggestions of Holstian texture and harmony in *A Prayer* and *The Christmas Rose*, and similarities with Ireland's piano writing in the increasingly searching piano music, could be interpreted as a sign that Bridge was aware of the evolving styles of his British contemporaries and drew on them for inspiration. *A Prayer* is one of Bridge's most 'English' sounding works, occasionally approaching the choral style of Parry, and looking ahead to the series of choral works which Dyson began to produce a decade later (compare, for instance, the opening of *A Prayer* with that of *Quo Vadis*). An evaluation of the English elements in works such as *Summer* and *A Prayer* is however complicated by the influence of modern French music, common to many English composers of his generation, and the fact that Bridge ventured much further than his contemporaries in subsequent works isolates him considerably from their ranks.

The chamber music is uncompromising in its modernist aesthetic, following on from the style explored in the Piano Sonata, and maintaining (indeed developing) the rigorously logical and essentially abstract processes of the earlier chamber works. They are much more advanced than the Piano Sonata in terms of texture, and the fluid instrumental lines create a subtler harmonic world than the blunt, polychordal language of the Sonata. As suggested in the previous chapter, a number of factors conspired to aid Bridge's stylistic evolution. The precise influence of the War is impossible to evaluate, but the changing stylistic direction would presumably have seemed apposite. Similar trends can be seen in the work of Vaughan Williams, Bax and Ireland, all of whom also reached full maturity around this time. Virginia Woolf's aside in *To the Lighthouse* of 1927, 'the war, people said, had revived their interest in poetry', while seemingly incidental and frivolous, nevertheless alerts us to a reality that is also relevant to Woolf's work.<sup>3</sup> Reflecting the wider changes in human experience arising from the war, poetry (and literature more generally) entered a new phase necessitated by a new outlook. The grim realism of the war poetry recast traditional ideas about 'the poetic' (in other words the idyllic, whether in terms of subject matter or its presentation) as necessarily nostalgic. This new aesthetic outlook was evident in other arts, for instance painting and music, and Bridge's new idiom and recontextualisation of 'romantic' elements is clearly in keeping with such developments. The fact that these tied in with previous trends should not, however, be overlooked – the seeds of change had been

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<sup>3</sup> Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p. 153.

sown long before the outbreak of war. Expressionism is emblematic, fostering an intensity of expression that may have seemed apposite, but being rooted firmly in previous developments.

Marjorie Harris, arguing against the validity of expressionism in 1929, suggested that artists erroneously considered emotion to have 'penetrated to the heart of reality'.<sup>4</sup> In fact, this is an elegant description of the issue at hand, if we understand 'reality' to be an altered outlook towards life, art and expression, which could appropriately be explored through the expansion and subversion of previous stylistic and expressive elements. Typical too is Harris's pedantic attitude, simplistically divorcing 'reality' in art from expression. Interestingly, Harris rejects the idea that 'the artist is a neurotic [who] puts his own loving and hating, his own abnormal psychical states, into his painting', but suggests that the expressionists effectively articulate this view through their work without wanting to do so.<sup>5</sup> As already mentioned, the relation of modernism to neurosis was a recurring aspect of criticism (relating to previous concepts of hysteria and effeminacy in art), for instance in critical responses to the premiere of Schoenberg's *Five Orchestral Pieces* in 1912. These were described variously as 'the dismal wailings of a tortured soul, [suggesting] nothing so much as the disordered fancies of delirium or the fearsome, imaginary terrors of a highly nervous infant', and evoking 'hypochondriacal melancholia'.<sup>6</sup> The references to neurosis are also more generally telling, given what A.R. Fulton described fifteen years later as a 'broadening application of philosophical thought to everyday life', expressive of a changed worldview 'accelerated by Freudian psychology and the psychoanalytic spirit of the times'.<sup>7</sup> By suggesting that the expressionists are themselves to blame for the criticisms levelled at them, Harris is attempting to 'beat them with their own stick', as it were. To what extent did these concepts colour Bridge's view of his musical development? It is certainly conceivable that they had some relevance in his output from *Dance Poem* onwards, even if only as an evanescent influence mediated through the intellectual climate of the period.

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<sup>4</sup> Marjorie S. Harris, 'Two Postulates of Expressionism', *The Journal of Philosophy* 26/8 (April 1929), 212.

<sup>5</sup> Harris, 'Two Postulates of Expressionism', 214.

<sup>6</sup> Reviews in *The Globe* and *The Referee*, quoted in Deborah Heckert's 'Schoenberg, Roger Fry and the Emergence of a Critical Language for the Reception of Musical Modernism in Britain, 1912-1914', *British Music and Modernism, 1895-1960*, ed. Matthew Riley (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 52. Metzger notes similar responses to *Pierrot Lunaire* in America in 'The New York Reception of "Pierrot lunaire"'.  
<sup>7</sup> A.R. Fulton, 'Expressionism: Twenty Years After', 399.



Modernist elements were often deemed not only unhealthy and immoral, but also un-English, a charge invoked in criticisms of Bridge's post-tonal music, for instance in reviews of the Second Piano Trio, claiming that

in this present international vogue of atonalism [we are faced] with a new species of Kapellmeistermusik. Mr Bridge is not the only instance of a composer on this side of the Channel having suddenly adopted a manner ... that bears no recognisable relationship to his own natural development – and, like so many others, he can no longer be regarded as a 'young British composer'.<sup>8</sup>

The *Musical Times* commented on the same work, which it described as 'profoundly disappointing':

What seems evident that he has made common cause with the advocates of modernity and put technical interest before aesthetic pleasure ... my impression is that he is bartering a noble birthright for less than a mess of pottage.<sup>9</sup>

*Phantasm*, meanwhile, was described as

[resembling] several other work of recent years in suggesting a quest in a wrong direction. His creative gift is beyond doubt, but he seems to have chosen a culture that does not bring out its fertility.<sup>10</sup>

Such parochialism on the part of his countrymen must have troubled Bridge, who clearly favoured an open-minded approach, commenting on the BBC in 1932 'they are cosmopolitan in their outlook which is good' and encouraging Britten's interest in modern German and French music.<sup>11</sup>

Not only did the new aesthetic directions roughly coincide with Bridge reaching full maturity as a composer, but also with his growing sense of disillusionment with 'the rut of my grey-haired professional existence', particularly as performer and teacher (which, to make matters worse, involved much time-consuming travel) when he would have preferred a steady conducting appointment.<sup>12</sup> His waning enthusiasm for performing is

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<sup>8</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 November 1929, 8.

<sup>9</sup> 'New Music', *The Musical Times* 71/1047 (May 1930), 422.

<sup>10</sup> 'London Concerts', *The Musical Times* 75/1092 (February 1934), 170.

<sup>11</sup> Letter to Coolidge 25 November 1932.

<sup>12</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 7 December 1923. For a discussion of Bridge's financial affairs and his first visit to America (which was the starting point of Coolidge's patronage) see Trevor Bray's 'Frank Bridge's First Visit to America', *British Music Society Journal* vol. 8, 1986.

notable, dwindling after the copious chamber music activity at the RCM to an obvious unwillingness to perform in the 1920s, exemplified by his wish (on being invited to attend Coolidge's 1923 Berkshire Festival) 'to come to America as a composer and conductor only, and not as an instrumentalist of any sort' and, finally, giving his viola to the young Benjamin Britten when he set out to America in 1939.<sup>13</sup> Writing to Britten's father in 1930 (before Britten entered the RCM), Bridge pointed out that 'a career in any art is always difficult at the beginning'; it seems unlikely, however, that this would have seemed the case to the young and enthusiastic Bridge in the first decade of the century.<sup>14</sup> Rather, this was his retrospective view of life as a working musician once he had long grown tired of its considerable demands and scant rewards. Conducting was clearly seen as a more elevated form of musical employment, Ethel writing to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge in 1922:

It should be too wonderful if he gets enough work conducting so that he needn't go on "quartetting" except for pleasure, as I'm sure – and so is Frank, that the public doesn't take one seriously as a conductor or composer if one is a member of a quartet.<sup>15</sup>

Although Bridge was disappointed at his failure to secure a regular conducting post, Coolidge's patronage alleviated the financial considerations of such an ambition, and it was Coolidge who reminded Bridge where his priorities should lie, forcing him to admit in 1931 that 'my [early] desire to be a conductor ... is only incidental to my existence and not the essential.'<sup>16</sup>

By Bridge's reference to 'at the beginning' we might thus understand a retrospective view of his career up to 1923, when Coolidge's financial support facilitated Bridge's modernist experiments, reducing the necessity of earning a living by teaching and performing and also allowing him to decrease his compositional output while he came to terms with his evolving style. Coolidge and Bridge first met in May 1922, at a gathering organised by Mary Rogers (wife of the publisher Winthrop Rogers) in London; they seem to have struck up an immediate rapport, and Coolidge invited the Bridges and Mrs. Rogers to join her on a tour of France two months later. They were also invited to the 1923 Berkshire Festival (in Pittsfield, Massachusetts), the main outlet

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<sup>13</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 29 November 1922.

<sup>14</sup> Letter to Robert Britten, 12 February 1930.

<sup>15</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 25 October [1922].

<sup>16</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 16 February 1931.

of Coolidge's chamber music patronage at that time; the 1923 festival focussed heavily on British music, and Bridge's String Sextet was included in the programme. During the same visit, Bridge also conducted a number of his orchestral works on a tour organised by Coolidge, including *The Sea*, *Summer*, *Sir Roger de Coverley*, and the *Two Poems* for orchestra, and Coolidge organised performances of the Second String Quartet, Cello Sonata, *Idylls* and some of his songs. Of these, Bridge singled out the *Two Poems*, Cello Sonata and Second String Quartet as being particularly close to his heart, commenting that he was glad Coolidge and her circle 'have now heard something that's not so old fashioned as the sextet or *The Sea*.'<sup>17</sup> From this it is clear that Bridge was concerned with promoting his newer music, presumably as a preparation for the increasingly difficult music he was writing at the time, and planned to write in the future.

During the visit Bridge wrote to Marjorie Fass:

All I want is a large commission to write a symphony, large enough to keep me off practical professional work for two years. Not that I don't want to write another stg quartet, but I do want to create a big work for orchestra...<sup>18</sup>

A few days later he wrote again: 'I'm bursting to get home and finish off my pft Sonata and do some big works no more snippets.'<sup>19</sup> Although his plan to write a symphony did not come to fruition at this time, he did succeed in finishing the Piano Sonata shortly after his return (March 1924) and writing another string quartet, the latter work in particular representing Bridge's post-tonal style at its most serious. Several of Bridge's greatest orchestral works also date from this period but he did not attempt a symphony; he was working on a Symphony for string orchestra at the time of his death, this medium being something of a compromise between orchestral and chamber forces and their attendant stylistic implications (as already observed in the Suite for Strings), facilitating a more abstract approach to symphonism than his usual orchestral manner.

The harmonic language of the later orchestral works is fascinating, often approaching that of the contemporary chamber music, but differing considerably in presentation. *Oration*, for instance, uses polychordal combinations such as the 'Bridge chord' (see below, p. 245), but a suggestion of harmonic stability is achieved through the widespread use of major triads in the treble parts. These combine with lyrical

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<sup>17</sup> Letters to Fass, 15 November 1923 and 29 October 1923.

<sup>18</sup> Letter to Fass, 15 November 1923.

<sup>19</sup> Letter to Fass, 21 November 1923.

melodic material and strong bass lines to create a more accessible form of the harmony found in the chamber music. Thus, while there are many similarities of language, the differing types of presentation hint at strongly contrasting aesthetic intentions. Mark Amos has argued persuasively that this divergence of style reflects Bridge's estimation of what was appropriate for the intended audiences – those of Coolidge's chamber music events on the one hand, and the wider concert-going British public on the other.<sup>20</sup> The technical similarities between the two groups of works are illuminating in that they demonstrate both the fundamental elements of the later style and its flexibility. In the orchestral works, Bridge uses conventional features to 'reassure' the listener, be it programmatic suggestions, sustained melody, allusion to march or waltz styles/tropes, or striking gestures such as the piano flourishes and dramatic orchestral interjections of *Phantasm*. Such devices are rare in the late chamber music, most being precluded by the textural and timbral limits that encourage and emphasise the 'abstractness' of the genre.

The first work completed after accepting Coolidge's offer of patronage was the Piano Sonata. In this work, Bridge comes closest to an obvious Scriabin influence, with similarities of harmonic and formal details as well as a number of Scriabinesque turns of phrase (for instance the *Andante ben moderato* and *Allegretto moderato* material of the opening pages, which recall the openings of Scriabin's Fourth and Fifth Sonatas). In more general technical terms, however, there are significant differences pointing towards the personal vision of the later chamber works, in features such as the use of the Bridge chord as a point of stability. Other possible influences on the late style are more difficult to evaluate, Bartok's Second String Quartet (particularly the first movement), for instance, having some superficial similarities with Bridge's Third Quartet. Although some motivic and harmonic elements are comparable, their treatment tends to be very different, and Bridge's somewhat baffling comment about Bartok in 1939 makes it seem unlikely that he had engaged with his music in any depth: 'The last war produced Jazz. (You) <sup>One</sup> can best leave the development of that to Bartok and friends.'<sup>21</sup> Such an evaluation would appear to stem from the wild, 'unpolished' aspects of Bartok's music (and jazz), an aesthetic that Bridge resolutely rejected throughout his career. Bridge appears to have admired Berg, and the two composers use some similar elements, but an evaluation of his influence is again difficult, due mainly to fundamental technical differences. While Bridge would not have encountered *Wozzeck*

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<sup>20</sup> Mark Amos, 'A Modernist in the Making'.

<sup>21</sup> Letter to Benjamin Britten, 28 December 1939.

until after many lasting elements of his post-tonal language had already been formulated in the Piano Sonata, the String Quartet op. 3 may have been an influence, as there are some harmonic and textural similarities to Bridge's later idiom.

In many ways the Piano Sonata is still a transitional work, looking back to the piano music of the previous decade as well as forward to the mature post-tonal style. Triadic harmony and chromatic voice-leading are not yet treated as freely as in the later works, while textures and motivic working are not as sophisticated. There is a searching, Scriabinesque quality in the striving for a form of complete freedom of expression, equal to the demands of large-scale architecture, that perhaps prompted Bridge's description of the work as 'my "metaphysical" Pfte Sonata'.<sup>22</sup> It is as if the Sonata represents a search for and exploration of elements from which one might construct a new language. Bridge's description of the work as 'metaphysical' highlights the abstract aspect of this process, Merton Yewdale describing 'the metaphysical foundation of pure music' in 1928 as its roots in noumenon rather than phenomenon. Yewdale compares 'pure' music with two baser (i.e. less abstract) varieties, 'personal' and 'descriptive', the former dealing with emotion, the latter 'objectifying Nature'. Music becomes metaphysical in the following way:

the man of genius, as phenomenal microcosm and living in the phenomenal macrocosm, yet bears within himself the universal idea of Nature as noumenal macrocosm. In a word, it is his intuitive knowledge of the noumenal that constitutes the source of all pure music, and it is this music, metaphysical in its conception, that is the objectification of Nature, not as phenomenon, but as noumenon.<sup>23</sup>

Yewdale relates this process to Schopenhauer's idea of the Will. If we speculatively place Bridge's comment within this intellectual context, the use of the word 'metaphysical' would appear to suggest a psychological and musical necessity. Bridge's motivation in offering such a description (in other words, whether he was himself searching for an appropriate description or was simply afraid that Coolidge would not like the work) does not alter its significance.

Predictably, critical responses to the Piano Sonata were bewildered and acerbic, continuing the trend of hostility and a complete lack of understanding already found in

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<sup>22</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 1 February 1925.

<sup>23</sup> Merton S. Yewdale, 'The Metaphysical Foundation of Pure Music', *The Musical Quarterly* 14/3 (July 1928), 400.

reviews of more 'difficult' earlier works such as the *Dance Poem* ('It is bizarre and both as regards its form and material it is designed apparently to amaze and startle. No doubt this is to be well in the fashion; but all the same the friends of the composer will hope that he will revert to the style in which he has distinguished himself') and the Cello Sonata ('for all its complete exhaustion of 'cello devices and registers [it] seems to say little beyond a series of genial pleasantries – like the meandering conversations of old age, it led no whither').<sup>24</sup> While evincing opposite views, both responses clearly stem from an inability to cope with the forward-looking elements of Bridge's music, leading simply to uncritical dismissal of what had not been understood. Such responses to his music were to become the norm during the rest of his career, particularly in England (critical responses in America were notably more sympathetic), and were certainly not helpful to Bridge's stature.<sup>25</sup> More painful were negative responses from allies such as Harold Samuel, a close friend, who was 'apparently ... baffled by Bridge's new style'.<sup>26</sup>

Bridge's post-tonal idiom relates strongly to the modernist trends already sensed in his earlier music, although, as the language becomes more complex, they can be difficult to identify. Many of the elements observed in works such as the first of the *Two Poems* and the post-1914 piano music (for instance the use of non-functional major-minor-seventh formations and polychordal sonorities) are developed in the later music, thus building on existing influences such as Debussy and Scriabin.<sup>27</sup> The influence of expressionism is significant, although the mature music of Schoenberg and Berg had little impact from a technical point of view. There are, however, some similarities of mood, suggesting a turn away from French influences after Debussy and Ravel – Cocteau's call for music to be 'more frivolous, stylistically anti-Teutonic and anti-intellectual' is strongly at odds with Bridge's aesthetic in the 1920s, when the contemporary French influence in Britain was most closely associated with Arthur Bliss.<sup>28</sup> While Bliss's music, like Walton's, achieved a sort of popular notoriety, the

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<sup>24</sup> *The Musical Times* 55/854, April 1914, 256; Daily Telegraph, 2 December 1922 (Bridge sent the clipping to Marjorie Fass, his note expressing both defiant indignation and annoyance, a combination that was to reappear on regular occasions henceforth).

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of attitudes to modernism in American culture of the time, see David Metzger's 'The New York Reception of "Pierrot lunaire"', which makes an interesting companion to Heckert's discussion of the *Five Orchestral Pieces*.

<sup>26</sup> Hindmarsh, *Thematic Catalogue*, 123. On playing the Sonata to Samuel, Bridge commented that 'somehow it seemed difficult to make him see what I was driving at' (Letter to Coolidge, 22 April 1924). Samuel did later participate in performances of Bridge's music.

<sup>27</sup> As the description 'non-functional dominant' is something of a contradiction in terms, I will use 'major-minor-seventh' within the context of post-tonal harmony.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas, 'The Impact of Russian Music in England 1893-1929', p. 97-8.

largest share of the public was clearly not ready to invest the sustained effort necessary to come to terms with Bridge's more radical style, a problem exacerbated by his use of complex, extended forms.<sup>29</sup>

Bridge's distaste for Bliss's music is understandable, and the rejection of much of his music in England and elsewhere must have caused him considerable distress. Having come so far, however, he was unwilling to abandon his hard-won technical and stylistic maturity. After a particularly negative review of the Second Piano Trio, Bridge wrote to Coolidge: 'I see quite clearly that it is going to be ... increasingly difficult for people who have standardized their ideas as to what music is when they compare my work at 27 and that at fifty, but that there can be any compromise between what is expected by others and what my instinct insists upon is an utter impossibility.'<sup>30</sup> The modernism 'insisted upon' by his instinct was highly personal, and it is most uncompromisingly explored in the late chamber music, beginning with the Third String Quartet. In this work, Bridge succeeds in gaining complete control over his newly-developed technical procedures and their aesthetic implications.

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### A Note on Bridge's Post-Tonal Harmonic Language

I use the term 'post-tonal' to describe Bridge's late harmonic idiom, as it is not generally governed by functional progressions between traditional chord formations. While the presence of prioritised pitches and chords, occasional suggestions of functional progressions, references to major and minor scales/keys/chords and suggestions of traditional harmonic features in melodic and bass line constellations precludes a description of material in general as 'atonal', large stretches of Bridge's late music extend significantly beyond what could reasonably be called 'chromatic' in any

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<sup>29</sup> In a letter to Marjorie Fass of 22 October 1922, Bridge comments on his difficulties in completing the Piano Sonata, not helped by the interruption of loud building work being carried out in the house: 'However the pressing need of the moment is what to do in my next bar. I don't suppose our "blissfuls" trouble themselves much about such a problem. That's why there is such an output of "Mélée" and "Fantasque".'

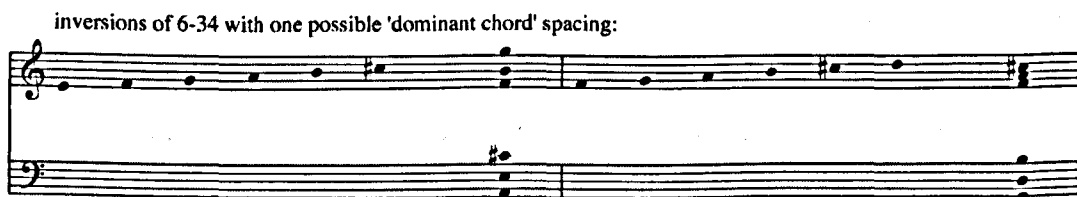
<sup>30</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 8 November 1929.

functional sense. Although I will not engage in detailed pitch-class set analysis, I will use Forte's classifications for a number of important recurring sets. A brief introduction to these harmonic features, their interval content and typical applications in Bridge's music at this point will be helpful to readers unfamiliar with the terminology, and make for a more streamlined analytical discussion subsequently.

Two symmetrical scales/collections are used widely in Bridge's post-tonal music – whole-tone and octatonic:



These are often presented as major-minor-seventh formations, and generally represent harmonic instability and indeterminacy arising from their symmetrical construction. Whole-tone and octatonic elements are used by Debussy and Scriabin, both of whom appear to have influenced Bridge's harmonic language considerably, although he applies whole-tone and octatonic elements in a very different manner (i.e. within a different context and according to a different logic). One of the most pervasive sets in Bridge's later music (although it has already been used in earlier works, notably the first of the *Two Poems for Orchestra*) is 6-34, which is closely related to the symmetrical scales just mentioned.<sup>31</sup>



In its normal (i.e. most closely-stacked) forms, 6-34 occurs in two distinct 'inversions', as given above, with five whole tones either preceded or followed by a semitone. Both

<sup>31</sup> For a discussion of pitch-class set analysis, see Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973) and Joseph N. Straus, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory*, second edition (New Jersey: Prentice Hall: 2000).



inversions yield major-minor-seventh formations on several pitches (F, G, A and D $\flat$  in the examples given above – i.e. the collections furnish chords with major thirds and minor sevenths stacked above the ‘roots’ F, G, A or D $\flat$ ).<sup>32</sup> Any single alteration to a whole-tone collection (i.e. the alteration of any one note by a semitone) results in 6-34:

whole-tone collection:

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef. It contains three measures of music. The first measure shows a whole-tone collection: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4. The second measure shows the collection with one note flattened: C4, D4, E4, F $\flat$ 4, G4, A4. The third measure shows the collection with one note sharpened: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A $\sharp$ 4.

one note flattened: 6-34                      one note sharpened: 6-34

6-34 can be found in many different contexts and spacings/inversions, but suggestions of dominant and augmented sixth progressions are used widely to great effect, building on the experiments contained in the first of the *Two Poems*. In such applications the high proportion of whole-tone content comes to the fore, as suggestions of ‘dominant’ or ‘augmented sixth’ constellations are often ambiguous, potentially leading to a wide variety of chords with some suggestion of functional progression. Bass lines are often instrumental in achieving a sense of harmonic direction.

6-34 is also a subset of 8-27, which is the alteration of any one note in an octatonic collection, i.e. it is the corresponding manipulation of an octatonic scale to that noted above in relation to the whole-tone scale and 6-34:

octatonic collection:

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef. It contains three measures of music. The first measure shows an octatonic collection: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The second measure shows the collection with one note (B) flattened: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B $\flat$ 4, C5. The third measure shows the collection with one note (A) sharpened: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A $\sharp$ 4, B4, C5.

one note (B) flattened: 8-27                      one note (A) sharpened: 8-27

Both 8-27 collections yield the following 6-34 collections:

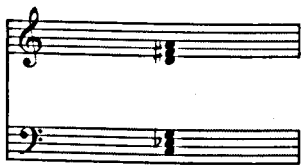
The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef. It contains two measures of music. The first measure shows the 6-34 collection derived from flattening B: C4, D4, E4, F $\flat$ 4, G4, A4. The second measure shows the 6-34 collection derived from sharpening A: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A $\sharp$ 4.

In both types of alteration, i.e. flattening or sharpening, a bunching of semitones and tones results – for instance A $\flat$ -A-B $\flat$  and B $\flat$ -C-D in the first example. Bridge seems to have developed a liking for such manipulations, where the cancellation of complete symmetry is itself governed by a certain regularity (a further example, 7-33, is given below). These manipulations yield collections with a high whole-tone and/or octatonic content, making for fluid harmony without being completely indeterminate. Pure octatonicism is reserved for areas of instability, and is pitted against non-octatonic

<sup>32</sup> Major-minor-seventh chords with flattened, perfect and augmented fifths also occur, for instance the hexachord 6-21 (e.g. C-E-F $\sharp$ -G-A $\flat$ -B $\flat$ ); like 6-34, the normal form of this chord is comprised of five whole tones (C-E-F $\sharp$ -A $\flat$ -B $\flat$ ) with one added note (G).

material in various guises, often derived from or relating to 8-27 collections. While the description '8-27 harmony' potentially covers a large portion of Bridge's post-tonal harmony (including Bridge chords and 'melodic minor' collections), the designation is particularly relevant where octatonic and non-octatonic harmony are brought into immediate relation, for instance through the alteration of a single note (emphasising the relationship between the collections). The most prominent examples of this procedure can be found in the Third String Quartet and will be discussed below. I will thus use the description '8-27 harmony' primarily to refer to a particular type of non-octatonic material, mediating between octatonic and more stable elements; this is somewhat idiosyncratic, but convenient in emphasising the non-octatonic character of material.

A number of prominent polychordal combinations are used in Bridge's music, often occupying a primary harmonic role, the so-called 'Bridge-chord' (a polychordal combination of minor and major triads a tone apart) being the most pervasive:

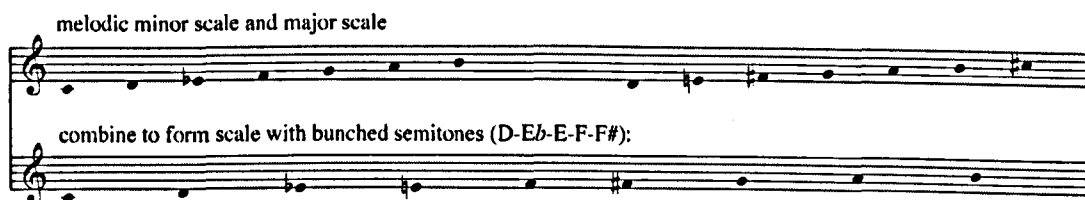


Other polychordal combinations also occur, for instance chords/keys a semitone apart (such as the 'shared-median' combination C minor and B major, or C major and B major, which features prominently in *Oration*), and Bridge chord variants combining chords a tritone apart (for instance C minor and F# major or minor). The shared-median combination effectively creates another recurring collection, whose presentation is not always polychordal – a minor chord with a major seventh and augmented fourth/eleventh. In the finale of the Fourth String Quartet, a complete 8-27 collection is formed by the combination of B major, C minor and D minor.

Spacings of 6-34, like whole-tone and octatonic formations, often approximate major-minor-seventh formations with added degrees, while Bridge chords tend to be presented with clearly separated (i.e. explicitly polychordal) triads. Both chords are also on occasion given in 'extended' versions. In the case of Bridge chords, this is usually achieved through the addition of a seventh degree to the minor chord, yielding septachords of stacked thirds:



In the Second Piano Trio an eight-note version is also featured, where both triads are furnished with added major sevenths. In the Violin Sonata and *Divertimenti*, the Bridge chord is used sparingly, although in the former some harmony appears to be derived from a combination of melodic minor and major scales a tone apart:

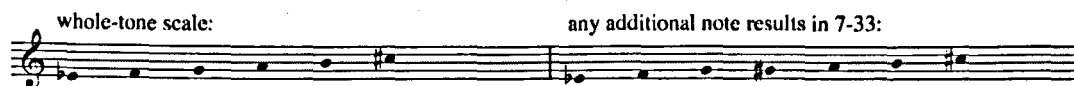


This is contextualised by the widespread use of chords based on the melodic minor scale, and a 'major mode' derived from the same collection – a major scale with flattened sixth and seventh:



Interestingly, 6-34, the Bridge chord and the melodic minor scale are all subsets of 8-27, although, given that Bridge generally treats these elements as having differing harmonic roles, this may be incidental. Bridge evidently thought of 6-34 (and similar non-octatonic chords, most often subsets of 8-27) as fulfilling a harmonic role mediating between the instability of octatonic/whole-tone collections and the relative stability of the Bridge chord and its extensions. Complete stability is most often represented by prioritised pitches and triads, and, in some works, areas of tonality.

A set closely related to 6-34 and the whole-tone scale is 7-33, which adds a seventh note to a whole-tone collection. Again, any addition results in the same set, in a manner similar to that discussed in relation to 6-34 and 8-27:



A similar manipulation of the octatonic scale (i.e. the addition of one note) can also occasionally be observed, resulting in the collection 9-10. Both these and complete 8-27 collections are, however, rare in Bridge's music.<sup>33</sup>

While a wide range of sets/chords/collections are used in Bridge's post-tonal music, the treatment of harmonic elements is remarkably consistent. Whole-tone or octatonic material suggests a fundamental instability and is often used in a 'quasi-dominant' role. Stability is represented principally by prioritised pitches and triads and, to a lesser extent, Bridge chords. 6-34 and similar sets (often related to 6-34/7-33 or 8-27/9-10) are placed between these poles, with more complex and dissonant chords appearing occasionally for local punctuation or tension. Other harmonic elements, for instance in the most dissonant parts of the Fourth String Quartet, are often explicitly related to prominent motivic elements. The harmonic language may thus be seen as a spectrum between the 'unstable' symmetrical scales and 'anchored' harmonic elements such as Bridge chords and prioritised pitches or triads (for instance F# [minor] in the Third String Quartet and A in the Violin Sonata). 8-27, 7-33 and 6-34 are contextualised as particularly prominent collections (or sources of harmony) located 'between' these two poles – an interpretation supported by an increasing emphasis on Bridge chords, rather than more wide-ranging 8-27 harmony, in the latter parts of works such as the Third String Quartet and Second Piano Trio (suggesting that their intended effect is stabilising). Much harmonically volatile material appears to be stabilised by melodies and bass lines suggestive of tonal areas and traditional melodic gestures, and chord-spacing in supporting harmony can also give the appearance of tonal direction or stability. The second subject of the Third String Quartet's first movement is an excellent

<sup>33</sup> Complete 8-27 collections can be observed in the Violin Sonata, for instance before and after [38] and at [39], in the fourth *Divertimento* after [8] and [13], and in the Fourth String Quartet, for instance in the first movement at [6]<sup>11</sup>. A prominent complete 9-10 collection occurs at [59] in the Violin Sonata.

example, relying heavily on octatonic harmony, but seeming relatively stable through its chord-spacings, strong bass lines and traditional melodic construction. The apparent stability obscures the material's inherent volatility, allowing the illusion of tonality on the surface to create an idyllic, impressionistic atmosphere, while the section simultaneously represents instability on a deeper structural level.

Tonal material appears in all of the late works, indeed it increases in prominence, from the isolated F# minor chords of the Third String Quartet, through the opening C# minor material of the Second Piano Trio, to the substantial tonal stretches of the Fourth String Quartet finale. The structural and aesthetic significance of these instances is varied, and will be considered in each case. While the inherent sense of stability provided by triadic harmony is carefully utilised, traditional tonal relationships and logic are not necessarily applied. In the Trio Rhapsody and Violin Sonata, tonal stretches in the second subject areas provide a slightly ironic pastoral idyll, which can be absorbed into an ultimate sense of acceptance that contrasts sharply with the nostalgic retrospect suggested by the conclusion of the Cello Sonata. In the finale of the Fourth String Quartet, meanwhile, rough-hewn stretches of tonality assert a (largely) non-traditional stability in a manner not entirely unlike Stravinsky.

Unlike the composers of the Second Viennese School, Bridge uses triads widely, whether in polychordal combinations or with added degrees, for instance augmented fourths or minor sixths, the latter being only one of a variety of chords that incorporate augmented triads. These are, however, often contextualised as belonging to one of the supersets already mentioned, and suggestions of tonal logic or functional progression are rare. The major triads with added sixths in the Violin Sonata's scherzo section are a case in point, suggesting a quantum of stability, but one whose aimless progression between chords is static in effect and is subsumed *en bloc* as but one type of 'melodic minor' harmony. Triadic chords with both minor and major third degrees (i.e. major/minor third tetrachords) are also used, often as components of larger formations highlighting a relation to octatonic and 8-27 collections. Many of the triads with added degrees are further related to one of Bridge's favourite motivic units, a stacked minor second and minor third (or interlocking minor and major thirds – I will use the designation 'minor/major third motif'), for instance C-D $\flat$ -E or C-D $\sharp$ -E; this motivic unit is used very widely, most exhaustively in the Trio Rhapsody. A similar motivic unit, also found throughout Bridge's late music, consists of a stacked minor second and

perfect fourth (for instance C-D $\flat$ -F or C-F-G $\flat$ ); like the minor/major third motif it is contained in several prominent harmonic features.<sup>34</sup>

The first movement of the Fourth Quartet is notable for its use of collections (derived from the movement's principal motivic material) that do not occur widely in Bridge's other music. A pervasive feature of the first subject is the use of chords derived from the first bar, whose four notes form a so-called 'all interval' tetrachord, 4-Z15, the 'smallest' collection to (potentially) contain all possible intervals; in its most compact form, the two inversions of the chord are:



The notes of the tetrachord yield all intervals up to a diminished fifth; re-voicing or inversion of the chord will thus yield any other interval. The initial version used in the Fourth String Quartet constitutes 4-Z15, but Bridge also uses a number of variants, for instance closely related tetrachords that use the same combination of intervals (i.e. minor second, minor third and major second) in some other order that does not yield all possible intervals (resulting in either 4-12 or 4-13), as well as enhanced and extended versions of these chords, i.e. all-interval tetrachords with added notes, whether within the chord, so that the normal form still spans an augmented fourth, or outside; two characteristic examples are given below (D and G# being the respective additions):



The first of these examples also refers to another unusual harmonic feature of the first movement of the Fourth String Quartet: the use of collections with bunched semitones (for instance the last beats of bars 7 and 8), again relating to the opening motifs (in this case the second bar).

<sup>34</sup> Harrison suggests that this is the most widely-used harmonic unit of the late period, but given that (like the minor/major third unit) it is usually presented as part of larger chords rather than on its own, this is somewhat misleading (it occurs in triads with added augmented fourths, 6-34, octatonic collections, the Bridge chord and several of its variants). While it is used widely, it is often as a constituent of larger chords, suggesting a preferred spacing rather than an independent harmonic unit, and its pervasiveness should thus not be exaggerated. Harrison, 'The Late Style of Frank Bridge', 236.

While there is a high level of motivic-harmonic integration in Bridge's music, a certain concentration on one aspect or the other is also often in evidence: significant harmonic features tend to be presented emphatically, for instance in primary harmonic elements of the Third String Quartet (F#, the C minor/D major Bridge chord, octatonicism) and Second Piano Trio (the C# minor ostinato of the opening, the Bridge chord and 6-34 content of the finale theme). Particularly octatonic sections tend to be overt in their harmonic significance, often presenting complete octatonic collections in substantial spans (ranging from individual chords to several phrases in length). Other material can often concentrate more obviously on motivic material, with rapid movement between 'smaller' chords as primary motifs pervade an often contrapuntal texture. Sketches for a Viola Sonata (H186) dating from the mid 1930s (one of only a handful of aborted manuscripts to survive) provide a rare insight into Bridge's working methods, for instance in passages where motivic material has been filled in without supporting parts or harmony. In other sections, for instance where ostinati have been indicated but melodic material has not been filled in, harmonic elements are much more emphatic. It is clear that Bridge was at pains to emphasise primary harmonic and motivic elements and the relationships between them. While technically complex in application, primary elements are thus clearly articulated and hence easily recognisable, so that structurally-significant polarisations are easily grasped through strong characterisation and contrast.

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### String Quartet No. 3

(i) *Andante moderato – Allegro moderato*

(ii) *Andante con moto*

(iii) *Allegro energico*

Like the Piano Sonata, the Third Quartet caused Bridge some difficulty, and in it Bridge crystallises many features of his late musical language, setting up a frame of reference for subsequent works. The drawn-out struggle to compose the work is again

documented in his letters to Coolidge, and having completed a version of the Quartet in February 1926, he returned to the work to make substantial revisions several times. The last of these was the simplification of some of the technical complexities of the parts, probably prompted by the Flonzaley Quartet's refusal to perform the work in August 1926, after they had initially approached Bridge with a view to giving the premiere.

As in the Piano Sonata, Bridge's post-tonal language here presents the analyst with considerable challenges; although principal harmonic elements are often easily recognisable, there is a considerable plurality of types of harmony used, with a wide range of chords/sets used in non-tonal and non-octatonic contexts. The often contrapuntal part-writing and complex motivic working can also complicate harmonic analysis, and I will generally focus on the more obviously significant features. Payne notes that 'Bridge approaches a Schoenbergian sense of pantonality, but the lack of semitonal dissonance in the chord spacing and the tendency to select whole-tone and dominant formations gives an individual flavour.'<sup>35</sup> The stylistic basis, influenced by Debussy, Ravel and Scriabin, is surely significant here. Edwin Evans's insightful description of balance between expressive and logical elements in the outer movements is noteworthy: 'The Russian epigoni of the Scriabin harmonic evolution would have made them much more feminine and more sensuous. The Germans would have made them more cerebral. Bridge has worked out a personal equation between harmonic hyperbole and plain-peaking.'<sup>36</sup>

The widespread use of 6-34 (Ex. 15-1, which gives a number of prominent instances from different works) and a number of related sets, often approximating major-minor-seventh formations, suggest a direct continuity with the harmonic language of previous works. As in passages such as the opening of the Piano Quintet finale and 'The Midnight Tide', major-minor-seventh formations are shorn of their usual stabilising effect, creating a fluid pantonality punctuated by occasional references to minor key areas. Only in the second subject of the first movement do the many conspicuously symmetrical chords (containing two or more major-minor-seventh constructions) begin to relate in quasi-functional ways, although the effect there is to emphasise the harmonic fluidity rather than to provide an anchor. As noted, the use of 6-34 and octatonicism, including in major-minor-seventh formations, is familiar from the music

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<sup>35</sup> Payne, *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, p. 72.

<sup>36</sup> Edwin Evans, 'Frank Bridge' in *Cobbett's Cyclopaedic Survey of Chamber Music*, 194.



Ex. 15-1: 6-34, (a) *Two Poems for Orchestra*, (i) *Andante moderato e semplice*, bar 6  
 (b) *The Hour Glass*, (iii) 'The Midnight Tide', bar 9  
 (c) *In Autumn*, (ii) 'Through the Eaves', last chord  
 (d) *String Quartet No. 3*, first movement, bar 5

of Scriabin, although the way these are employed differs considerably. The juxtaposition of octatonic collections found in Scriabin's most octatonic work, the Sixth Piano Sonata, for instance, stands in stark contrast to Bridge's use of octatonic elements in the Third String Quartet.<sup>37</sup> The formation of hexachords from dominants or combinations of dominants also resembles Debussy, as does their relationship to octatonic harmony, although fundamental differences in approach are again evident.<sup>38</sup>

The first movement opens with a nine-bar *Andante moderato* introduction (Ex. 15-2), presenting a number of primary motivic and harmonic elements. Motif *a*, with its prominent augmented fourth, is presented by the first violin, before the remaining parts combine in a descending motion (initiated by the first violin's chromatic descending line – the major seventh leap, D $\flat$ -C, continues the motion at a higher octave, also introducing a further prominent recurring interval), leading to the first instance of 6-34 (the initial C is interpreted as a suspension to B); significantly, this is approached from the octatonic fourth bar (the cello's F natural is a chromatic passing note), with the octatonic chord appearing to 'resolve' into 6-34. Motif *a* is heard in the cello part, and its distinctive augmented fourth is a recurring feature in the cello part throughout the work, whether as part of motifs *a* or *x* (see below), or on its own (there is some similarity here with the opening of the first movement recapitulation of Bartok's Second Quartet). A similar process to that observed in bar 5 can be traced in bars 7-9, where the first violin's G-F $\sharp$  movement implies a belated progression from an octatonic chord to 6-34. Here, and in the prominent F $\sharp$ /G $\flat$  of the subsequent bars, Bridge is prioritising a pitch whose central role is first revealed in bar 17 – the suspension thus resolves to a

<sup>37</sup> See Cheong Wai-Ling, 'Scriabin's Octatonic Sonata', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 121/2 (1996).

<sup>38</sup> See Allen Forte, 'Debussy and the Octatonic', *Music Analysis*, 10/1 (Mar-Jul 1991).

note whose significance we cannot yet grasp. The F# in bar 9 relates not only back to the previous bar, but also forward to the next chord, with which it forms 5-9, whose punctuating (almost 'cadential') role is confirmed later in the exposition. The strongly whole-tone character of 5-9 (all notes but one belong to a whole-tone scale) relates it to much of the surrounding harmonic material.

Andante moderato

5-9

Ex. 15-2: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 1 - 9

The main part of the exposition (*Allegro moderato*) appears to begin in the tenth bar (Ex. 15-3), although the most important motif (*x*) is not introduced in its primary form until bar 17 – it is however prefigured by the second violin's motif concluding bars 10 and 11 (F-A-A $\flat$ -D, marked [*x*] in the example). Meanwhile, two further significant elements of the movement have been introduced: motif *b* (whose rhythmic and intervallic content will later be related to *x*) and the Bridge chord, presented here in typically forthright fashion (i.e. its treatment is chordal, contrasting with the often contrapuntal parts, as well as being dynamically and metrically/rhythmically prominent – Ex. 15-4, Bridge chords are marked 'B.c.'; the first and third are incomplete, both

missing F#). The harmonic material of bars 10 and 11, meanwhile, while not obviously unified, is closely related to 6-34, and similar formations recur throughout the first subject (and the development section). Characteristically, the progression between seemingly unrelated chords is made palatable through the use of primary motivic material (violins) and a chromatic bass line.

**Allegro moderato** (♩ = 104)

Ex. 15-3: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 9 - 10

Ex. 15-4: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 15 - 16

5-9 reappears at the end of bar 16 (the same notes are used, although the approach – from a Bridge chord – and spacing are different), its quasi-cadential role confirmed as it leads to two of the most important elements of the movement, motif *x* and F# as a ‘tonal centre’ (Ex. 15-5). The gradual approach to this primary material exemplifies what Payne describes as ‘main material [appearing] after a period of assembly and preparation.’<sup>39</sup> Motif *x* is directly related to *a*, rearranging the order of intervals (from 1-

<sup>39</sup> Payne, *Frank Bridge – radical and conservative*, 73.

#4-5 to 1-[b3]-5-#4) in a manner of motivic manipulation already observed in earlier works. In this 'primary' form, *x* outlines a C minor chord, the final G falling to F#. Both C minor and F# major chords are present in the Bridge chords of the previous three bars (and F# is also prominent in bar 13), preparing the harmonic elements of *x*. The motif is thus related explicitly to both the Bridge chord and the F# minor chord, resulting in a sort of complex or nexus of principal elements. The first appearance of the Bridge chord (see Ex. 15-4) and the ensuing presentation of *x* (Ex. 15-5) are strongly coloured by the resonance of the cello's open C string, creating a sonic identity that is immediately recognisable on subsequent appearances, a timbral element that is again exploited to great effect in the Fourth String Quartet.



Ex. 15-5: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bar 17

In bars 21 and 22 the second of the pervasive first subject motifs is introduced (*c*, Ex. 15-6; the two distinct but related forms of the motif are presented in immediate succession), prefigured in bar 19 by the cello's F#-E#-E, followed by the viola's C. *c*, on its first appearance, briefly makes reference to a harmonic feature explored more fully in the Fourth String Quartet, the all-interval tetrachord (third beat of bar 20: B#-C#-E-F#); the discordant nature of this sonority contrasts with the more lyrical tone of the succeeding bars. Coming from the reference to F# minor, this section is the most tonally stable area of the first subject, suggesting a movement away from F#, towards references to G and D a few bars later, and sequential movement progressing by ascending fourths. These progressions are significant in local rather than structural terms, helping to differentiate and identify material, although the alternation of C# and C in the cello part at this point looks ahead to the prominence of these pitches

throughout the rest of the first subject, eventually representing a move away from F# (which remains prominent throughout much of the subject, particularly as a part of both *x* and *c*, but is abandoned in the approach to the final cadential gesture). Motif *c* is afforded extremely varied treatment (it is generally presented as a pair of descending thirds or descending semitones followed by a third, as in the two examples in Ex. 15-6) and features during most of the remainder of the first subject, interrupted only by a temporary resumption of motif *x*, suggesting a two-part ABA'B' substructure. On its first appearance it shares with *x* Bridge's favourite 'minor/major third' motivic fingerprint (B#-B-G# in *c* and Eb-G-F# in *x*).

Ex. 15-6: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 20 - 21

The first subject ends on an extremely complex and ambiguous cadential approach to (apparently) A minor (Ex. 15-7). Given the widespread presence of major-minor-seventh chords, Bridge is careful (as with earlier quasi-cadential progressions) to avoid any overt suggestions of dominant-tonic relationships. Instead he approaches the A minor chord from two conflicting, ambiguous dominant substitutes: a chord similar to a diminished seventh (acting as a dominant [incomplete minor ninth] to A) and a half diminished seventh chord on C (potentially a dominant [incomplete major ninth] to C#) – marked *y* and *z* in Ex. 15-7. The ensuing A minor chord thus fulfils the tonic role apparently implied by chord *y*, while also continuing the dominant role of chord *z* through the presence of G# (the dominant note to C#) and C (or B#, the leading note). The use of the cello's low C is surely also significant, creating a timbral connection to *x*, whose absence here emphasises the movement away from the first subject's principal elements. The following two bars explicitly refer to *x* and C minor, but do not reinstate

x. Interestingly, they form a seven-note subset of 8-27: C-D-E $\flat$ -G-G $\sharp$ -A-B (G being the non-octatonic note), emphasising the avoidance of prominent octatonic harmony during the first subject while perhaps preparing for the emphatic octatonicism of the second. As suggested in the previous section, 8-27 harmony (which pervades the first subject) might then be understood to represent a level of stability 'between' octatonicism and prioritised elements such as the Bridge chord and F $\sharp$ . In the recapitulation, the harmony of the first subject area is stabilised by the increased prominence of Bridge chords, focussing the harmonic content after the diffuseness of the exposition.

Ex. 15-7: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 47 - 49

The necessity of stabilising the first subject area as well as the second has significant structural implications, and can be observed in most of Bridge's post-tonal chamber works, most notably the Fourth Quartet. The unsettled character and expressionistic violence of the first subject is directly prefigured in the tonal period only in the First Quartet, and contrasts sharply with the lyricism of other previous chamber works. Rhythmically forceful figures alternate with impassioned melodic sections such as those featuring *c*, resulting in a highly volatile sound world suggesting violence and uncertainty. This is the expressionist equivalent of virile, affirmative material, and Bridge has to work hard to stabilise it convincingly. In the Third Quartet he accomplishes that first step, allowing him to move beyond its bleak and limited emotional scope in subsequent works. Rather than equate this expressive content with a speculative mental anguish on the composer's part, one might identify in it a full acceptance and exploration of the aesthetic, stylistic and technical tendencies evident in Bridge's music since the First Quartet and confirmed in many works from the Piano

Quintet and *Dance Poem* onwards. Exploring the full potential of expressionistic tendencies in this work is no less remarkable on Bridge's part than their subsequent integration into a wider aesthetic vision, and the Third Quartet stands as one of Bridge's most perfect creations.

The interruption of texture and introduction of an unprecedented voicing, with parallel major triads in first inversion moving around a sustained note, give the outset of the transition the illusion of inhabiting a completely new sound-world (Ex. 15-8). The resulting chords are, however, directly related to previous harmonic material, suggesting the type of reiteration of harmonic content in an altered manner of presentation familiar from earlier transition sections, for instance the Second String Quartet. This material alternates with a descending theme derived from the introduction. The second subject (Ex. 15-9) is also directly reminiscent of the Second String Quartet, particularly in terms of texture. The harmony, meanwhile, appears considerably

Ex. 15-8: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 52 - 54

Ex. 15-9: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 65 - 68

enriched in comparison to the previous material, with collections of up to eight notes widespread; 6-34 and a number of related hexachords feature regularly, although the pervasive source of harmony is octatonicism, signalled by the complete octatonic collection contained in the first bar of the subject. Phrase structures, and hence the melodic make up, are considerably more regular than in the fragmented, unsettled first subject, approximating the traditional phrase structures observed in Bridge's tonal music. This suggests a more traditional aesthetic, and melodic movement enhances a sense of functional progression.

Chromatic movement between parts, the use of chord-spacings suggestive of major-minor-seventh formations and more regular melodic/phrase structures combine to give a vague sense of functional relationships, contributing to an impressionistic haze emphasised by the fluid texture. A number of instances of side-stepping motions reminiscent of augmented sixth progressions in earlier works are emblematic, for instance the approach to the first violin's first counterstatement of the theme (Ex. 15-10), from an octatonic dominant seventh on G, to G $\flat$ -B $\flat$ . The 'augmented sixth' progression is deceptive, as the second chord turns out to contain a dominant on C, suggesting (by its voicing at any rate) a sort of secondary-dominant progression, although Bridge's exploitation of the ambiguity resulting from the whole-tone content of 6-34 (the bar features two separate versions of 6-34, including either the violin's E $\flat$  or D $\flat$  – the second, on beat four, appears to emphasise a G $\flat$  root for obvious reasons) is highly characteristic.<sup>40</sup> As a result, any progression between such chords descending by semitone (of which there are many throughout the second subject) contains both two 'dominant-tonic' progressions (for instance F-B $\flat$  and B-E, see Ex. 15-10, bars 4-5) and two 'augmented sixth' progressions (for instance F-E and B-B $\flat$ ). The former are emphasised by bass lines implying a V-I or leading-note to tonic motion, the latter by bass lines descending by semitone (i.e. implying a  $\flat$ VI-V motion). Bridge uses a large number of both types of progression in the second subject. On one occasion, Bridge achieves a 'subdominant' flavour, approaching the most diatonic bar of the section (bar 84, in C major) from harmony containing dominants on E $\flat$  and A. This chord had descended two bars previously to a dominant on D (soon to acquire a sort of 'tonic' identity); by moving to C instead, that chord is clearly imbued with a subdominant flavour. (Does the timbral reference to *x* in the cello's open string approximate a

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<sup>40</sup> The treatment of 6-34 to suggest functional progressions often relating to Bridge's earlier treatment of augmented sixth chords recalls the first of the *Two Poems* for orchestra in particular.



traditional tonic-dominant relationship between subjects, further emphasising the ‘subdominant’ flavour of its placement here?) This coincides with the dramatic melodic climax of the second subject, making it even more prominent.

Such suggestions of harmonic function enhance the idyllic impressionism of the ‘shimmering’ textures and rich harmonies. Following on from the Cello Sonata, a nostalgic element in this idyll is particularly significant. As noted by Linda Hutcheon, ‘nostalgia is less about the past than about the present. It operates through what Mikhail Bakhtin called an “historical inversion”: the ideal that is not being lived now is projected into the past’.<sup>41</sup> This idyllic projection becomes increasingly complex in the late works, as second subjects tend to seem more stable than surrounding material, so that stability is presented as being transitory (i.e. *unstable*). In the Third Quartet Bridge treats the second subject as a distant idyllic vision, stabilising primary material on its

The image displays a musical score for the first movement of String Quartet No. 3, specifically bars 76 through 80. The score is written for four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo and mood are indicated as 'Poco a poco animato' and 'n tempo'. A box labeled 'octatonic' spans bars 76 to 78. The music features various dynamics such as *p*, *pp*, and *cresc.*, along with articulations like *rit.*, *pizz.*, and *arco*. There are also performance instructions like *espress.* and *dolce*. The bottom system shows bars 79 and 80, continuing the melodic and harmonic development.

Ex. 15-10: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 76 - 80

<sup>41</sup> Linda Hutcheon, 'Irony, Nostalgia, and the Postmodern', <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/criticism/hutchinp.html>, accessed January 2010.

own terms; in later works secondary material was to be treated more productively, its potential to change and stabilise its surroundings being explored in various ways. In more general terms, the harmony of the second subject represents instability through its heavy reliance on octatonicism, whose harmonic indeterminacy and fluency is used as a counterpole to the complex of 'grounded' primary first subject elements and their blunt, forceful articulation. The underlying instability of the second subject is revealed more fully when shorn of its serene tone (defined by the suggestions of functionality and lush textures) at the end of the development section and on its reappearance in the finale.

The fluidity of the harmony can be gauged by examining a few characteristic examples from the last part of the violin's first counterstatement (Ex. 15-11). Bars 85 and 86 feature octatonic and whole-tone content, respectively (in bar 86 C# and F are added to a whole-tone collection to create separate 7-33 collections). Bar 87 (bar 3 of the example) features a shift between two octatonic chords derived from different collections, while the following bar demonstrates the possibilities for presenting both octatonic chords and 6-34 as major-minor-seventh formations: the first half of the bar is octatonic, suggesting a major-minor-seventh chord on A, the second half is heard as a continuation of that chord, with a flattened fifth in the bass (in a different arrangement, this chord might be heard as a major-minor-seventh on B, and in the next bar the movement from B to B $\flat$  in the second violin part reinterprets E $\flat$  as the root). The movement between octatonic and 8-27 harmony through the alteration of a single note is characteristic. The entire progression is largely held together by voice leading, especially the chromatically descending bass line.

The image shows a musical score for four staves, representing the first movement of a String Quartet. The staves are arranged from top to bottom: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music spans four measures, corresponding to bars 85-88. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The bass line in the Cello/Double Bass part is notably chromatically descending, which is a key feature mentioned in the text. The overall texture is dense and complex, reflecting the octatonic and whole-tone harmonic language described.

Ex. 15-11: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 85 - 88

The construction of the entire subject contrasts strongly with the fragmented previous material, consisting of three varied statements of a single theme. Motivically, the section is relatively limited, with most material deriving directly from the initial statement. The third version (10) is the shortest, trailing off after the first phrase. Its fourth bar is presented as prioritising the hexachord 6-27 (apparently voiced as a major-minor-seventh chord on G#, with an uncharacteristic added major seventh and augmented ninth), which, in an incomplete version, has already been encountered in a similarly disruptive role in the eighth bar of the first statement of the theme (the cello's *forte* interjection of a diminished fifth and major seventh referring to motifs *a* and *b*), initiating the transition to the more impassioned first violin counterstatement. In fact, this chord is octatonic, as is the subsequent septachord on D; the handling of this harmonic material is masterful, using the same octatonic collection to suggest tension and resolution, simply by altering the voicing, the second chord suggesting a D 'root' (Ex. 15-12), absorbing and neutralising the previous chord (in other words, the entire passage is based on a single octatonic collection). The alternation of these chords prolongs the initial four-bar phrase of the third statement by five bars and achieves a distinctly cadential effect (the octatonic chord on D is felt to be 'tonicised', or at least stabilised), leading to a brief return of transition material. The concluding emphasis on octatonicism also relates back to the first subject's conclusion prioritising 8-27.

Ex. 15-12: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 94 - 97

The transition material (11) heralds the development, where motifs *x* and *b* are reintroduced, followed by chords derived from the first bars of the exposition (bars 10-11), developing the motivic material associated with those chords (marked [*x*] in Ex.

15-3 – as noted, this motif is a rearrangement of *x*, and the last beat is a retrograde version of *a*), while also relating to the descending material from the introduction (Ex. 15-13).<sup>42</sup> This treatment grows more elaborate but is interrupted by a resumption of the original derivation and motif *a* ([15]<sup>3</sup>). The ostinato bass pattern ([16]) and the remaining material of the *Allegro giusto* section grow out of the preceding motivic development and harmonic material, building in intensity and leading to a climactic treatment of *x* and related first subject motifs ([18]). Although major-minor-seventh chords are rare, chords containing major thirds (most often with a semitone or tone stacked above it, i.e. a perfect or augmented fourth above the ostensible ‘root’) are still pervasive, with minor (and occasionally diminished) chords beginning to feature increasingly towards the end of the section. The differentiation of octatonic and non-octatonic material is less of an issue in the development, which thus seems to be somewhat ‘removed’ from the harmonic tension created between subjects. More significantly, the prominence of Bridge chords and prioritised pitches C and F# is significantly reduced. The climactic *x* material leads to a short section ([19]<sup>3</sup>) recalling the forceful, homophonic Bridge chord passage of the first subject (again bringing the Bridge chord and its motivic derivative *x* into relation).



Ex. 15-13: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 110 - 113

Textural and harmonic references to the second subject ([19]<sup>2</sup> and [20]<sup>5</sup>) and motif *c* (from [19] onwards, though prefigured as [18]<sup>2</sup>) lead to another chordal section ([21]<sup>3</sup>) relating to the Bridge chord segment of the exposition. Only one of the chords used is a Bridge chord, however, the others being minor chords with added degrees, treated

<sup>42</sup> See Payne, *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, 74, for a discussion of the latter relationship.

sequentially. The arrival at C minor, and the appearance of *x* in both C minor and F# minor would seem to herald the recapitulation ([21]), but the continued development of material from the introduction and opening of the exposition, presented in a manner reminiscent (in terms of texture and voicing) of the transition suggests otherwise. The development section thus makes pervasive use of motivic and harmonic elements from the still introductory part of the exposition (i.e. before the first statement of *x* – principally bar 10, cf. Ex. 15-3), in a sense providing an alternative ‘trajectory’ of developing material than that observed in the first subject. The effect is remarkable, resulting in one of Bridge’s most satisfying and ‘organic’ development sections, exploring and reworking first subject material to build tension and create an appropriate sense of instability without recourse to functional harmony. The imaginative treatment of identifiable harmonic and motivic elements enlarges on the unstable, violent aspects of the first subject exposition, preparing for a ‘clarified’ reappearance of principal elements in the recapitulation.

Second subject material returns ([22]), considerably texturally altered. The melodic material appears in the cello part, with syncopated treble chords in the upper string parts relating to the preceding ‘transition’ texture. While the harmonic material is not unlike that of the exposition, its presentation, slower tempo and the presence of a C# pedal note (the lowest note of the texture, in the viola part) emphasise the difference. It is thus unclear whether this second subject material is developmental or recapitulatory until the resumption of second subject material in a more familiar guise ([24]) reveals the movement’s arch-shaped structure. The previous references to C minor and *x* thus constitute a false recapitulation, perhaps not unlike the earlier ‘hybrid’ sonata-arches. The initial textural and harmonic manipulation of the second subject links it strongly to the development, emphasising the arch-form in a manner familiar from earlier oblique harmonic approaches to second subject recapitulations (for instance in the finale of the String Sextet and first movement of the Cello Sonata). Bridge compensates for the lack of functional harmony in this process in a number of ways, the initial transformation of second subject material making for a sense of stabilisation in the subsequent ‘recognisable’ form. After the harmonic vagueness of the octatonic second subject and the motivic/harmonic exploration of the development, the subsequent reappearance of essential first subject elements achieves a considerable sense of ‘return’ and stabilisation, emphasised by the arch-form.

A number of local details serve to emphasise this process. The harmonic transition to the familiar first violin counterstatement of the second subject (effectively the beginning of the recapitulation proper) resembles the ambiguous dominant/augmented sixth approach in the exposition, although the effect is very different. The movement from a major-minor-seventh chord on G# to a G bass note would seem to suggest a typical 'augmented sixth' descending motion; the voicing obscures this relationship, however, avoiding the descending chromatic bass line found in the exposition (Ex. 15-14). Two pedal notes, A and C# (both are maintained in the next bar), destabilise the approach harmony and the reference to a major-minor-seventh chord on G on the second (minim) beat of the  $\frac{3}{2}$  bar makes the first chord of the violin counterstatement sound much less remote. Taking the initial melodic E as a suspension, this forms a 6-34 hexachord; in the exposition its remoteness was emphasised, here it is minimised. This harmonic reworking thus simultaneously relates and differentiates the progression in the recapitulation from that in the exposition, resulting in a local release of structural tension not unlike that discussed in the Second String Quartet, although it is less noticeable in a non-functional harmonic context.

Ex. 15-14: String Quartet No. 3, first movement, bars 200 - 201

The rest of the second subject recapitulation closely resembles the exposition, leading (as before) to a resumption of transition material. The intrusion of  $x$  after  $\boxed{26}$  quickly leads to the first subject recapitulation ( $\boxed{28}$ ), recalling the first appearance of  $x$  in the exposition. While the first violin recalls the original part, the lower strings re-harmonise the material, resulting in a simple Bridge chord (C minor and D major), explicitly relating the exposition's F# minor chord to the Bridge chord. The delay of the

F# minor chord until the end of the movement further emphasises the arch form, the first subject having 'departed' from F# in the exposition – here the reverse is the case. As in the exposition, *c* material follows, although treatment is varied until the reappearance of the ascending sequential derivation. The subsequent section is again heavily altered; harmonic material is similar, but with a continued emphasis on Bridge chords. An extended version of the original first appearance of *x* follows, re-establishing F# minor as an identifiable key area before the emphatic unison ending on F#. The first subject recapitulation would thus appear to play a distinct role in the 'sonata' process, as adapted to a non-tonal context: by concentrating on the Bridge chord and motifs *x* and *c*, it appears to be something of a distillation of the original first subject and the way it was presented. The final F# is approached from a 6-27 hexachord, which is imbued with a sense of tension by its octatonicism and its use in a disruptive role at the end of the second subject – this time resolution is provided by the F#, associated as it is with the first subject.

The sense of concentration in the first subject recapitulation contrasts with the development, which is characterised by the extraction of motivic and harmonic elements that appear fresh, while deriving directly from principal material (although, significantly, from the part of the exposition that is omitted in the recapitulation). It is technically Bridge's most advanced development section, combining established procedures (such as the use of an ostinato bass and the merging of development and second subject recapitulation) with an unprecedented mastery of thematic manipulation. The extensive development of thematic and harmonic material from the first bar of the exposition (bar 10 – *Allegro moderato*) is particularly impressive. The recapitulation, meanwhile, crystallises the movement's principal 'stable' elements. It is only at the end of the third movement, however, that Bridge can convincingly demonstrate their stability.

The second movement contrasts strongly with the first; while there are some similarities with Bridge's familiar 'lyrical' and 'intermezzo' styles, there are no immediate precursors in the earlier music. In line with recent tendencies exemplified in the first movement and the Piano Sonata, phrase structure is much more fragmented and thematic/motivic treatment more complex (a significant advance even on the mature tonal works). The movement opens with an embellished Bridge chord (D minor and E major, Ex. 15-15a); the embellishment (an added G) is taken further with the addition of B $\flat$ , followed by a repeated A-F-G# figure shared by cello and viola (an obvious

example of a repeated minor/major third motif), which acts as a harmonic anchor during the first and last sections of the movement. The concentration on the Bridge chord found in the last part of the previous movement is thus continued, and there are few obviously octatonic passages; much of the movement occupies a fluid harmonic sound world, with pedal notes providing points of departure for harmonic exploration while giving the illusion of stability (a process already implied in the opening chords). A 'spinning out' of motivic and harmonic elements ensues, as chords are formed primarily through the manipulation of motifs. The horizontal articulation implied in this procedure can also be observed in the few octatonic passages, where individual parts are derived from separate octatonic collections and combined to create a highly chromatic sense of harmonic indeterminacy. These grow out of the material that follows the introductory passage, particularly bar 14 (Ex. 15-15b), the octatonic fragments in the violin parts growing into the substantial ascending octatonic passages before **6** and **10**, and after **14**.

Andante con moto (♩ = 72)  
*con sordino*

The musical score shows the first four bars of the second movement. The top three staves (Violin I, Violin II, and Viola) are marked *con sordino* and *pp*. The bottom staff (Cello/Double Bass) is also marked *con sordino* and *pp*, and includes *pizz.* and *arco* markings. The music is in 3/4 time and features a mix of eighth and quarter notes with some rests.

Ex. 15-15a: String Quartet No. 3, second movement, bars 1 - 4

*rit.*

The musical score shows bar 14. The top two staves (Violin I and Violin II) are marked *rit.* and feature a chromatic ascending line. The bottom two staves (Viola and Cello/Double Bass) have simpler accompaniment.

Ex. 15-15b: String Quartet No. 3, second movement, bar 14



A single contrasting phrase (Ex. 15-16) interrupts the continuous exploration and development of principal material, followed by an immediate return of the initial material (taken from bar five), leading to renewed and more varied development. (This material – Ex. 15-17 – appears at first hearing to be new, but is closely related to both the principal material, continuing the ‘bunching’ of seconds and their inversions, and the contrasting phrase.) A counterstatement of this apparently contrasting material and further development build to a climactic phrase combining motivic material from the previous section and the contrasting phrase (Ex. 15-18).

Containing prominent major seconds and parallel diminished and perfect fifths, the phrase opens on a *fortissimo* 6-34 chord, alternating with a chord containing ‘bunched’ semitones (B $\flat$ -B-C-C $\sharp$ -E-F-F $\sharp$ ). A single *fortissimo* statement of motif *x* (in its ‘basic’

a tempo (sostenuto)

Ex. 15-16: String Quartet No. 3, second movement, bars 22 - 25

Tempo I

Ex. 15-17: String Quartet No. 3, second movement, bars 30 - 33

**Piu mosso**

The image displays a musical score for a string quartet, specifically the second movement of String Quartet No. 3. The tempo is marked 'Piu mosso'. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four staves. The first system (bars 53-58) features a climactic passage with strong dynamics (ff) and trills. The second system shows a diminuendo leading to a trilled chord (pp) and then a return of the contrasting phrase.

Ex. 15-18: String Quartet No. 3, second movement, bars 53 - 58

C-E $\flat$ -G-F $\sharp$  form) is followed by a *diminuendo* trilled chord, consisting of two more characteristic tetrachords (major triads with added minor sixths) and combining to form a complete whole-tone collection with two added notes. While such collections are used in several later works, for instance in the Violin Sonata, here the chord has some similarities with the embellished Bridge chord in bars 2-4, and links harmonically to a resumption of the contrasting phrase. Given the previous climax, and the fact that it occurs just before the midpoint of the movement, it is possible to suggest that the return of the contrasting phrase initiates the second part of a sort of binary form. Since the second half of the movement does not break much new ground in terms of thematic and harmonic material, it is possible to see it as varying, rather than fundamentally developing, the substance of the first half, alternating more and less familiar versions of previous material. There is a sense of decreasing intensity (certainly in dynamic terms) after the climax, followed largely by '*piano*' and '*pianissimo*' markings, emphasising the role of the climactic phrase as a structural division in a two-part form. This overlaps

with a suggestion of ternary form, in which the central section is defined by the presence of the 'apparently contrasting' material given in Ex. 15-17 (i.e.  $\boxed{5}$  -  $\boxed{10}$ ), although this interpretation is complicated by the continuous development of principal material in the central and subsequent sections, and the placement of the contrasting phrase after the climax seems to suggest the beginning of a new section rather than a continuation.

The continuous exploration of a limited range of thematic and harmonic material combines with the contrast in character to the previous movement to separate the central intermezzo from the violent activity of the outer movements. The single reference to *x* at the moment of maximum intensity is typical, drawing the character of the first movement into the 'escape' of the second, although, as in the second movement of the Cello Sonata (and we will observe an immediate parallel in the central section of the Trio Rhapsody), Bridge's escapism is no longer as complete and convincing as in the pre-war works. Instead, this music inhabits a somewhat 'nocturnal' or 'phantasmal' world, familiar from some of the transitional piano music, suggesting an escape into darkness rather than the bright idyll of earlier works. The harmonic elements of the movement are delicately poised between the more demonstrative outer movements, the 'open' ending emphasising its role as intermezzo. Much of the effect relies on this 'suspension' between the tumultuous outer movements, allowing it to explore some of their elements while also retreating from their drama. The role of the Bridge chord as a starting point is significant, implying a calmer exploration of one of the first movement's more stable harmonic components. The balance of harmonic elements, treatment of motifs and resulting arrangement of material within the flowing structure make for one of Bridge's most exquisite creations.

The finale opens with renewed treatment of *x*, building to a syncopated first theme ('*risoluto*', Ex. 15-19), which relies heavily on movement by semitone and alternation of minor and major thirds (relating to similar harmonic/motivic elements already observed in both of the previous movements). This section uses Bridge chords pervasively and is preceded by an octatonic chord, again suggesting a contrasting (i.e. 'quasi-dominant') identity. Rhythmic figures involving semiquavers appear to derive motivically from *x*, often implying the shift between major and minor thirds just mentioned (Ex. 15-20, looking ahead to primary motifs in the Trio Rhapsody and Violin Sonata), combining with the widespread Bridge chords to link the three movements and

perhaps refocusing the harmonic language after the explorations of the second movement. Some other, relatively 'stable' harmonic elements from the first movement reappear, particularly major triads with added augmented fourths or minor sixths, but major-minor-seventh formations are rare throughout the first part of the exposition, creating a somehow more 'robust' sound-world. Minor seventh degrees begin to reappear towards the end of the first segment, and they are maintained throughout the rest of the first subject.

Ex. 15-19: String Quartet No. 3, third movement, bars 19 - 25

Ex. 15-20: String Quartet No. 3, third movement, motifs derived from x:  
first violin, bar 30; bars 32-33; bar 42

The second segment features triplets (Ex. 15-21) and is closely linked to the previous material, also suggesting a derivation of the first movement's motif *c*. There are occasional suggestions of octatonicism, at the outset of both this section and the second subject, the second segment of the first subject acting as a sort of development and dissolution (in terms of harmonic and motivic content) of the previous material. The introduction of a distinctive texture featuring *tremolando* triplets (initially deriving from the triplet motifs of the previous section) links to the second subject, which maintains the use of *tremolando* triplets, adding a pedal G# in the first violin part and featuring a cello melody relying heavily on held and repeated notes (Ex. 15-22). The triplet material thus acts as a sort of extended transition, or indeed transformation – as much

Ex. 15-21: String Quartet No. 3, third movement, bars 57 - 58

**Agitato** (♩ = 136-144)

Ex. 15-22: String Quartet No. 3, third movement, bars 102 - 110

'away from' principal first subject material as 'towards' the second subject. Like the first subject, the second has two distinct parts, the second of which texturally resembles the first, primarily through the continued use of a pedal note (viola, Ex. 15-23). This is placed amid parallel major triads (in first inversion), recalling the transition section of the first movement, exemplifying the type of subtle interconnections favoured by

Bridge in his mature music (particularly the derivation of finale material from earlier movements). Unlike the clear divisions of the first movement, the individual sections of the finale exposition are closely and continuously linked, in a sense representing a progressive shift away from principal elements associated with the Bridge chord and *x*.

A sort of disintegration of texture and thematic liquidation cuts a final counterstatement of the second subject's second theme short, leading directly to a statement of the first movement's second subject (16), complete with octatonic harmony – the movement 'away from' the Bridge chord is now complete. The section is structurally ambiguous, completing the harmonic shift just described (and the reference to the first movement's transition is again significant, recalling the original approach to this material), but also standing apart from the surrounding material, thematically and harmonically. It is lengthy, growing in intensity towards a sudden interruption of *x* and the main theme of the finale (21), which is apparently developmental, recalling the false recapitulation in the first movement, when Bridge chord material reappeared in the development section.

Ex. 15-23: String Quartet No. 3, third movement, bars 133 - 136

As in the first movement, recapitulation of second and first subjects follows (23 and 27), leading to an extended coda, which recycles material from the previous movements. Only the first part of the first subject (i.e. that with the pervasive Bridge chord harmony) is afforded extended recapitulation, mirroring the emphasis on primary harmonic elements towards the end of the first movement. The second segment appears only briefly (32), building in dynamic and textural intensity towards the reintroduction of first-movement material (33). This acts as a link to the tranquil main part of the

coda, starting with motif *b*, before *c* is again related to the triplet figure given in Ex. 15-21 (continuing the sense of thematic integration across movements), and concluding with references to the introduction of the first movement (34). The quiet tranquillity of the remainder of the coda is established by the reappearance of second movement material (35), leading to explicit references to the initial appearance of F# minor and *x* in bar 17 of the first movement. These elements persist, bringing the work to an end. The sense of stabilisation is achieved primarily through the arrangement of material throughout the movement (Fig. 15-1). After the calm central movement, the opening of the finale immediately resumes the concerns of the first movement. The concentration on *x* and Bridge chords recalls the 'semi-stable' elements of the end of the first movement; from there the progressive destabilisation of material towards the extremely unsettled central octatonic episode (via the second subject recalling the first movement's transition) amounts to a large-scale abstract gesture recreating and emphasising the tensions of the first movement. The octatonic episode builds in intensity towards a climactic expressionistic outburst in the development of first subject material, fully abating only at the end of the movement. The 'semi-stable' status of the finale material, and the ensuing references to the first movement's first subject exposition (including the discordant all-interval tetrachord, both on the appearance of *c*, and during the cello's ensuing reference to *a*, suggesting that Bridge is reminding us of the least stable parts of the first subject), are transcended by the *tranquillo* coda that follows, convincingly establishing not only the primacy of the F#/x/Bridge chord

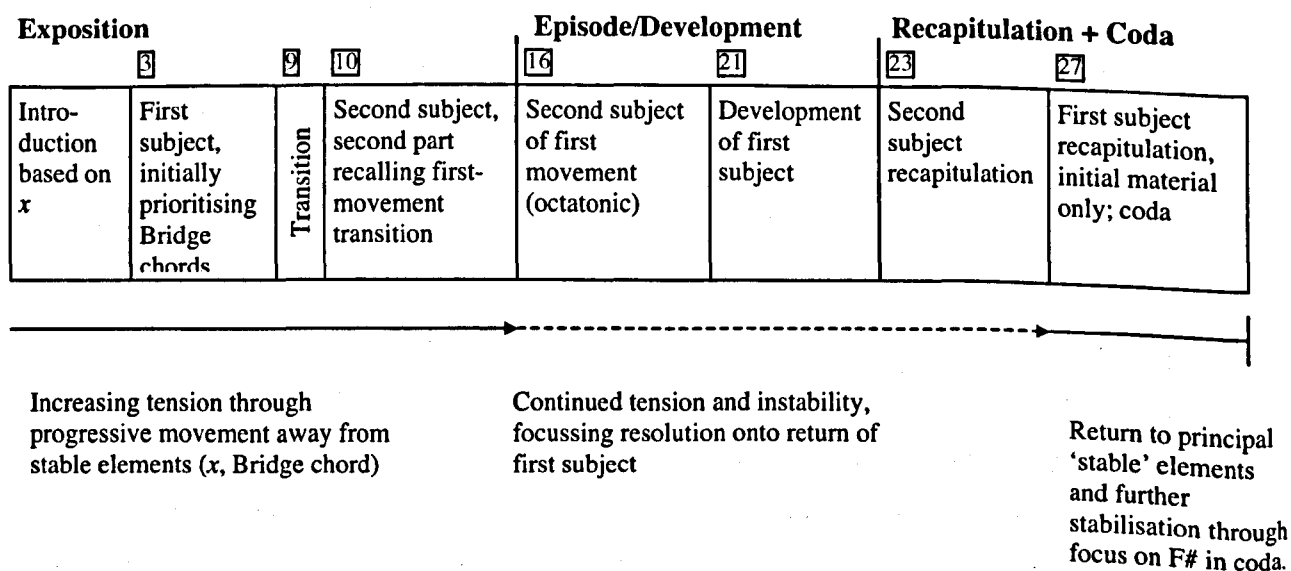


Fig. 15-1: String Quartet No. 3, plan of finale

complex (which had already been asserted at the end of the first movement), but focussing specifically on F# as the true symbol of stability. The cello's abandonment of C within *x* during the last bars suggests a stabilisation of *x* 'towards' F#, the major/minor third structure of the remaining Eb-G-F# linking with other prominent applications of this element, such as the cello/viola accompaniment motif in the second movement and the second part of the finale's second subject (particularly in the recapitulation, again suggesting a crystallisation of elements, in this case motivic material).

The preceding reappearance of material from the second movement is significant, distancing the conclusion from the preceding violence. On its first appearance near the beginning of the work, the F# minor chord is clearly presented as being a primary harmonic element, its emergence from its fragmented and chaotic surroundings perhaps hinting at its stabilising role; the third movement works through the contrasting, unstable elements, allowing the stability of F# to reveal itself fully. It is the stabilising core at the heart of the Bridge chord and *x*, the final disentangling of these elements acting as a clear 'movement beyond' the preceding turmoil and volatility. In this stabilisation of expressionistic elements there is a gritty coming to terms with reality, and in the way it is achieved – which suggests 'working through' the problem – a sense of perspective that contrasts strongly with the conclusion of the Cello Sonata. How one might interpret this 'reality' in a context beyond the technical concerns of the work is a difficult question – one could, however, venture to suggest that it implies a realisation and acceptance of aspects of Bridge's personality, musical and more generally. Perhaps it explores the insecure, perfectionist element of Bridge's personality, driving him on to expand his stylistic and technical range, coloured by his bitterness over the various negative responses to these tendencies. That he felt compelled to explore areas of his creative personality that went beyond the limits of what he could safely expect his wider audience to accept had been clear from the *Dance Poem* onwards. In the Third String Quartet this impulse is given full expression, allowed to unfold completely, and accepted with all its implications. The fact that it was written for an audience and patron capable of appreciating it does not alter its significance in this respect – Bridge had merely been given a convenient outlet for the exploration he evidently felt compelled to attempt, an outlet that required no compromise. This surely aided the acceptance of the more searching elements of his creative personality.



## Trio Rhapsody

The Trio Rhapsody is one of Bridge's most unconventional works, and ranks among his greatest achievements. It is the longest single movement of the chamber music, and despite the title 'Rhapsody' it is one of his most disciplined. Its level of motivic integration is unparalleled in Bridge's output, with great variation in character, texture and treatment of a small amount of basic motivic material. A detailed analysis, demonstrating the full extent of motivic-harmonic integration, would be vast, and I will limit my discussion to some of the more salient points. The unorthodox distribution of material has led to differing analyses of the form, none of which take into account the rhapsodic nature of the work, whose looser application of sonata principles contrasts with Bridge's usual formal habits.<sup>43</sup> As I will discuss, suggestions of sonata construction are applied to a more progressive arrangement of material that is simultaneously episodic and organic.

After eight introductory bars, the principal motivic elements of the movement are presented: the closely related *a* and *b* (Ex. 16-1). *a* is already suggested in the fourth, sixth and seventh notes of [*b*] (F-A-A), and is yet another instance of a minor/major third motif. *b*, like *a*, permeates thematic and harmonic material throughout the movement, yielding a number of three-note derivatives which are used prominently throughout, comprising combinations of an interlocking major third, perfect fourth or augmented fourth (Ex. 16-2) – two harmonic derivations can be observed in the chords that immediately follow the initial statement of the motifs (bars 4-5, Ex. 16-1). In the course of the movement, a number of extended versions of *a* are also used (Ex. 16-3), all of which are symmetrical. The first is used widely, its alternating minor and major second interval structure suggesting octatonicism, which it does indeed engender in the bars leading up to [11] and [12] (it leads to a combination of octatonic scales at [19]<sup>5-7</sup>). This is but one step in a continuous exploration and development of the basic motivic elements, however, and obvious octatonicism is limited to these brief instances (in line with the general sense of motivic-harmonic integration). A number of other collections with symmetrical interval content feature more widely, including whole-tone collections and many prominent augmented and diminished chords, the latter alternating with

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<sup>43</sup> See Harrison, 'The Late Style of Frank Bridge', 368, and Payne, *Frank Bridge – radical and conservative*, 80.

chords derived from *b* in the pizzicato phrase before [1]. Whole-tone harmony is on occasion related to the derivative of *b* with whole-tone content (the second derivative given in Ex. 16-2), suggesting a further correlation of harmonic and motivic content.

Ex. 16-1: Trio Rhapsody, bars 9 - 13

Ex. 16-2: Trio Rhapsody, three-note derivatives of *b*, with inversions

Ex. 16-3: Trio Rhapsody, extended versions of *a*

A number of sections based on *a* and *b* follow the introduction, beginning with an *Andante (molto moderato)* section featuring several prominent incarnations of both motifs ( $A^1$ ,  $A^2$  and *b* in Ex. 16-4). This is followed by the introduction of contrasting material (*serioso e sostenuto*) featuring quartal/quintal harmony, which persists for some time after the reintroduction of *a*. The placement of this contrasting material so early in the movement creates the illusion of prolixity, and is thus something of a red herring, given the unity of the subsequent music. Its placement recalls the corresponding part of the Third String Quartet's central movement, a parallel emphasised by the homophonic texture featuring chords marked by 'robust' intervals such as major seconds, fourths and fifths. Much of the ensuing material is again dominated by *a* with the minor third stacked above the semitone, i.e. the inversion of the form that dominates the *Andante* theme. It is less prominent in the *Allegro molto*

theme in which its basic form initially appears (Ex. 16-5a), but grows more so in later incarnations (Ex. 16-5b and c).

The pervasive presence of *a* (as well as *b*) is particularly obvious in the first two examples; in the third, a collection similar to *b* assumes a stabilising role (c), suggesting a tonality of C or F major. In its character and increased sense of harmonic stability, this section fulfils a quasi-second-subject role that looks ahead to the Violin Sonata and Fourth String Quartet, where the second subject turns out to be a stabilising influence amid unstable primary material. The previous section (with the 'extended *a*' triplet accompaniment figure) thus occupies an almost transitional role between the initial

Andante (molto moderato)

The musical score for Ex. 16-4 is written for piano and consists of two systems of three staves each. The tempo is marked 'Andante (molto moderato)'. The first system begins with a piano part marked *ppp dolce* and a triplet figure. The first violin part has a *ppp* dynamic and a triplet figure. The first system concludes with a section marked *pp dolcissimo* and *A<sup>2</sup>*. The second system continues with dynamics ranging from *mp* to *mf*, including markings for *p*, *p espress.*, *dolce*, *trem. pont.*, and *b*. A first ending *A<sup>1</sup>* is also indicated.

Ex. 16-4: Trio Rhapsody, bars 49 - 58

Allegro molto

The musical score for Ex. 16-5a is written for piano and consists of three systems of three staves each. The tempo is marked 'Allegro molto'. The score is characterized by a strong *f* dynamic throughout. The first system includes markings for sections *a* and *b*. The second system includes a marking for section *a*. The third system includes a marking for section *b*.

Ex. 16-5a: Trio Rhapsody, bars 99 - 102

Ex. 16-5b: Trio Rhapsody, bars 231 - 233

Ex. 16-5c: Trio Rhapsody, bars 253 - 256

*Allegro molto* material and the 'c arpeggio' section. The viola's arpeggio pattern soon reverts to *b* and *a* content, however, leading to a distinctly transitional section that reintroduces theme *A'* as well as deriving much of its harmony from *a*. This is continued in the ensuing homophonic *tremolando* section, whose chords (which include 6-34 and whole-tone chords) relate strongly to the principal motifs; consider for instance the presentation of the 6-34 chord in bar 308 (27<sup>9</sup>), which is suffused by *b*: G#-D-F#, D-F#-C and C-E-B. This gives the homophonic section the appearance of growing out of the many chords based on *a* and *b* used throughout the movement – Ex. 16-6 gives an example of a particularly integrated extract.

Ex. 16-6: Trio Rhapsody, bars 120 - 123 (*a* and *b* harmony indicated above top line)

Ex. 16-7: Trio Rhapsody, bars 328 - 331

The transitional *tremolando* section is followed by the second, more protracted, contrasting interlude of the work (29), a pastoral passage of stark beauty centred around G# (suggesting a Phrygian mode, Ex. 16-7). Hopwood describes this interlude as a ‘pastoral oasis’, a concept he defines as being ‘not only a pleasant, fertile area of rest, but ... also – and equally importantly – surrounded by a harsh and difficult environment’.<sup>44</sup> A number of important, recurring hallmarks of Bridge’s pastoral interludes can be observed here, including the sense of contrast and escape, as well as its ultimate inability to influence the surrounding drama directly. There is an icy quality to the material, particularly in the final version featuring trills, that looks ahead to the opening of the Second Piano Trio, suggesting a frozen pastoral. The widespread use of *tremolando* connects it to the surrounding transitional passages, also removing it from the main progress of the movement more generally (*tremolando* textures are associated with subsidiary sections throughout the work).

*a* returns (33), followed by a brief reference to the transition material, leading to a varied recapitulation of the *Allegro molto* theme, and onwards (as before) to the sections with triplet (46) and arpeggio (49) accompaniments given in Ex. 16-5. The latter section is extended considerably, combining with theme *A*<sup>1</sup> to form one of the most texturally striking sections of the work (51), featuring *sautillé* arpeggios in the viola and second violin parts. The arrival at the viola’s resonant open C string (particularly after a previous concentration on G) is surely significant, suggesting a sense of ‘grounding’ (which connects with the final chord), and hence resolution, prophetic of the use of the cello’s low C in the Fourth String Quartet. *A*<sup>1</sup> and *tremolando* chords in transitional garb lead to a final return of the introductory triplets and a whimsical conclusion. There are thus elements of arch form, particularly in the return of *A*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Hopwood, ‘Frank Bridge and the English Pastoral Tradition’, 262.

followed by introductory material, which give further formal definition conducive to a sense of resolution; there are obvious similarities with apotheosised statements of principal material in several other chamber works by Bridge. A sense of overriding harmonic logic or tension is replaced by the motivic-harmonic integration represented by *a* and *b*, whose varied treatment, presentation and development are the source of forward momentum and balance. The possibility of stability, presented by *c* and related material, goes some way towards absorbing or neutralising the more wayward *a* and *b*, particularly in the final 'c arpeggio' section.

The two contrasting interludes provide a temporary escape from these pervasive elements, apparently standing 'outside time' in a manner typical of Bridge's idylls. A more pragmatic form of stability, integrated into the continuous process and forward momentum represented primarily by *a*, is the 'c arpeggio' section (Ex. 16-5c). *c* is a more stable alternative to *a* or *b*, and may also relate to the principal (opening) motif of the pastoral interlude (cf. Exx. 16-5c and 16-7). *c* also appears in its original form later on in the interlude, and is integrated into the harmony (for instance on the last beat of the second bar of Ex. 16-7). There is thus a subtle sense that the pastoral interlude has some relation to the process of stabilisation in the latter part of the work, although this is somewhat tenuous – the pastoral is the counterpole to *a* and *b*, and motif *c* and the 'grounded' C (minor and major) orientation of the *sautillé* section mediate between these extremes, achieving an accommodation that seems somewhat uneasy, but is sufficient to halt ongoing development of principal components and bring the movement to a close. This unease is emphasised by the repetitive, mechanical figures and somewhat ironic tone of the 'c arpeggio' section, which prepare for the triviality of the coda.

The 'whimsical' stability provided by the final bars, while related to previous stable elements, is largely inconsequential, a concluding gesture rather than a resolution or synthesis. Unlike the epilogue of *Oration*, which substantially transforms the effect of that work, the gesture has no bearing on the impression made by the preceding material, whose logic of developing variation, harnessed by the arch-form elements and offset by the interludes, is independent of the coda. It is the prioritising of continuous development that inspired the title 'Rhapsody', emphasising the free unfolding and development of material. The balance between unfolding and teleological/synthetic elements achieved here was to have a noticeable effect on the later works, from the emphasis on process rather than goal in the Second Piano Trio to the sense of balance

found in the Violin Sonata and Fourth String Quartet. Unlike these works, however, the final pages create a sense of light, playful insincerity (which has parallels in parts of the *Divertimenti*) that is entirely in keeping with the 'rhapsodic' framework constructed by Bridge; the effect is offset by the tone of the 'serious' interludes, whose sincerity represents an untenable idealistic integrity. The resulting exchange between structural logic and meaningful representation, i.e. of stabilising and destabilising elements and the varying values that seem to become attached to them, is extremely complex, and is an important step in Bridge's exploration of the technical and aesthetic preoccupations of the late works. While the form combines references to sonata and sonata arch with a more progressive outline (Fig. 16-1), Bridge's treatment of textural features gives considerable structural definition while also exploring the range of textural possibilities yielded by the instrumentation as widely as possible. The introduction, coda, transitional sections and contrasting episodes are clearly differentiated from the rest of the work, whose progressive development of *a* and *b* takes place largely in contrapuntal textures. The 'extended *a*' triplet section interrupts this texture, leading to the '*c* arpeggio' texture, which appears considerably stabilised while melodic material continues to relate to principal motivic elements. Texture and function of material are thus intimately connected, building on existing elements and preparing for subsequent works.

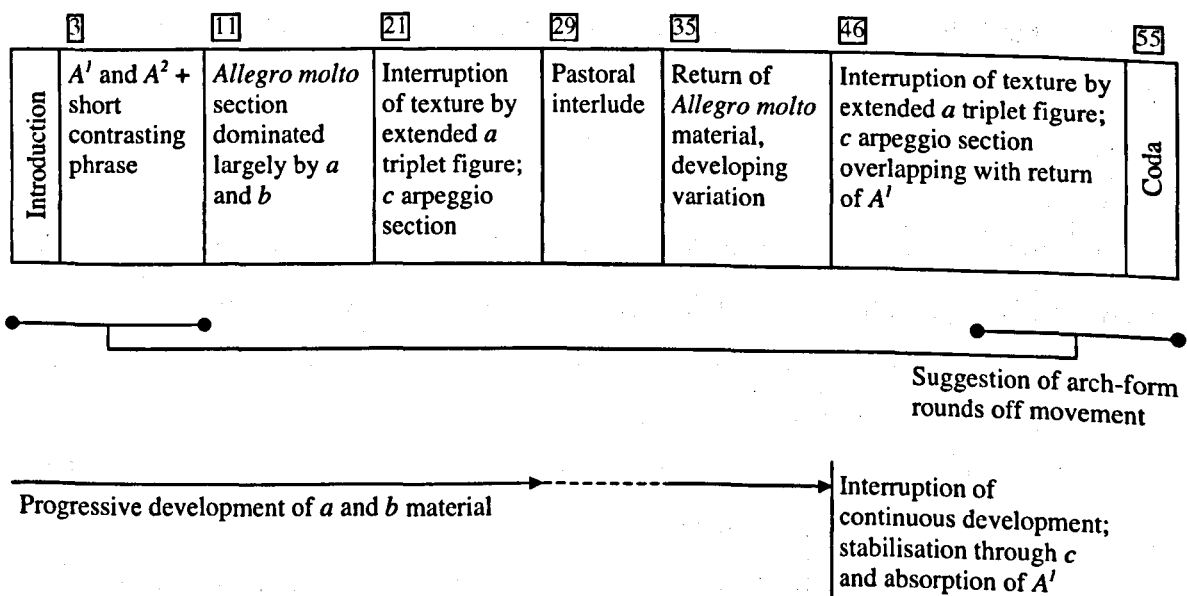


Fig. 16-1: Trio Rhapsody, formal outline

## Piano Trio No. 2

(i) *Allegretto ben moderato*

(ii) *Molto allegro*

(iii) *Andante molto moderato*

(iv) *Allegro ma non troppo*

The mood and language of the Second Piano Trio contrast strongly with that of the Third String Quartet, reintroducing suggestions of stable key centres, and relating directly to much of the earlier piano music in its darkly impressionistic, 'phantasmal' mood. The latter description, conveniently suggesting a connection with the slightly later *Phantasm*, may contain a clue: the presence of the piano certainly influences the tone of both works, relating to earlier music with piano more obviously than works such as the Third String Quartet, Trio Rhapsody or *Oration*. The Quartet, by comparison, is severe and uncompromising, reflecting a duality of styles in the earlier chamber works with piano or for strings alone (for instance the First String Quartet and subsequent *Phantasies*, or the Piano Quintet and String Sextet). Textural features arising from the presence of the piano recall earlier chamber works with piano, influencing the harmonic language.

The opening demonstrates this relationship, proceeding (after a brief introductory section, Ex. 17-1) to a subdued lyrical first subject, with sustained, often imitative melodic string parts and a stabilising piano ostinato, *x* (Ex. 17-2, comparable, for instance, to the first subject of the *Phantasy Piano Trio*, cf. Ex. 9-2), the first of many repetitive patterns in the work. Although the introduction is less impassioned than in the earlier works, its presentation of principal motivic and harmonic elements recalls both the Third String Quartet and the much earlier Piano Quintet (revised version), another chamber work with piano featuring sustained string melodies and a persistent ostinato at the outset (cf. Exx. 11-2 and 11-3). The harmony here seems to suggest C# minor, with chromatic melodic notes sounding like *appoggiaturas*, auxiliary or passing notes, although they also occasionally relate to motif *b*, which dominates the second part of the introduction. The ostinato stabilises the harmony in a manner not comparable with harmonic/textural elements of the Third String Quartet. *b* (which, like *a*, contains prominent minor/major third motivic components) returns to facilitate a transition to a more chromatically inflected variant of *x* at a lower octave (☐). This is the first step



towards the destabilisation of tonal identity provided by the pedal note, which is abandoned after 29 bars (4). The ostinato pattern continues, however, and its harmonic

**Allegretto ben moderato** (♩. = 63)

Ex. 17-1: Piano Trio No. 2, first movement, bars 1 - 9

Ex. 17-2: Piano Trio No. 2, first movement, bars 13 - 15

implications derive from its (chromatic) treatment in the previous section. The abandonment of the pedal note leads to a sense of fluid chromaticism, initially suggesting key centres of F and C, before being further destabilised, with major chords with added augmented fourths relating back to the chromatic appoggiaturas of the lower C# pedal section and preparing for a climactic, highly chromatic bar ( $\boxed{6}^1$ ), whose content suggests 6-34 (G#-Bb-C-D-E-F), looking ahead to the middle section.

Motif *x* reappears over a G# pedal, before C# is regained in a transitional derivation of *x* ( $\boxed{7}$ ). Although the previous chromaticism precludes a strong sense of functional movement, there is some sense of harmonic closure, overlapping with the transitional function of the section and recalling the reiteration of primary harmony in the transition section of Second String Quartet. Motif *b* pervades the ensuing middle section (particularly the derivation *b2*, which incidentally forms an all-interval tetrachord, its lyrical application here contrasting strongly with its discordant presentation in the Third and Fourth String Quartets). The use of Eb and C pedal notes during the transitional section emphasise a sense of harmonic movement, and the main theme of the middle section features F and A pedal notes (Ex. 17-3). Harmonic material in both sections closely resembles characteristic 6-34 and 6-21 formations, embellished in the piano figuration and string melodies.

6-34 is stated emphatically as the A pedal note is abandoned (Ex. 17-4, which constitutes a single 6-34 collection), and is the basis of subsequent harmony, followed by other major-minor-seventh formations directing harmony away from the apparent stability and suggestions of tonality and polychordal harmony provided by the pedal

The musical score consists of three staves. The top two staves are for Violin I and Violin II, both in treble clef. The bottom staff is for the Piano, in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The Piano part is marked *p dolce*. A dashed line labeled *b2* spans the interval between the notes G# and A in the second measure of the Piano part.

Ex. 17-3: Piano Trio No. 2, first movement, bars 103 - 106

Ex. 17-4: Piano Trio No. 2, first movement, bar 120

notes and *b*. 6-34 here provides considerable contrast to the harmonic material of the first section, whose ('minor key') ostinati avoided major-minor-seventh formations. Harmonic and thematic material is freely developed, building to an ecstatic climax featuring treble trills that looks ahead to the finale, indicating the ability of *b* to transcend the restrained tone of the principal material.

6-34 and other major-minor-seventh formations continue to feature as the transitional role of *b* is resumed, linking to the reappearance of the second, more chromatic version of *x*, complete with C# pedal ([17]). This does not last long, however, and melodic material, while based on *a*, is fragmented. Lengthy and varied treatment of *x*, reminiscent of the start of the transitional section, abandons the pedal note, before it returns for a brief apotheosised *Allegro* statement of principal material, supported by a constant C# pedal ([20]). There is a striking similarity with the impassioned return of principal material towards the end of the Phantasy Piano Quartet. Here the effect is brutal, a forceful presentation of the 'mechanical' *a* material, a characterisation that is achieved not only through the widespread use of the ostinato and its harmonic content, but also the constitution of the melodic material. Avoiding lyrical outgrowths (even of the type observed in the Third String Quartet), its concentration on primary motifs, with statements often separated by prolonged held notes, significantly informs the mood of cold sterility. The restatement of *a* and *x* material is followed by a short, final section that maintains the C# pedal, but is largely based on *b*. The use of octatonic and 8-27 harmony looks forward to the remaining movements, and the disruption of the stability of *x*, and the resultant 'open-ended' conclusion, is prophetic of the end of the work.

The first movement is thus Bridge's first opening to a multi-movement chamber work that makes no reference to sonata form. Perhaps there are further similarities here with the Phantasy Piano Quartet, and like in the earlier work Bridge constructs a convincing alternative, resulting in an unorthodox but coherent structure. The fundamental opposition of the work, between the 'cold', mechanical stability of *a* and the more lyrical and wide-ranging *b*, is bluntly presented. The trajectory of these opposing forces in the Trio contrasts strongly with comparable elements in previous works, however, a factor that surely influenced Bridge's abandonment of sonata arrangement in the first movement.

The scherzo is in many ways characteristic of Bridge's 'scherzo with piano' manner, again inviting occasional comparisons with the Phantasies. There are also similarities of construction with other earlier scherzos, although the fluidity of treatment of the material here is even greater than in previous instances. The harmonic elements of the first movement are developed, with 6-34 and 6-21 combined in a typical 'almost-symmetrical' set, 7-33, which is used widely. There are also references to 8-27 and octatonic harmony. As in the first movement, such harmonic elements are balanced by ostinato patterns suggestive of specific key areas, principally G minor. These two harmonic and technical elements (suggestive of volatility and stability) are articulated in the first and second sections (Ex. 17-5), which provide the majority of the remaining material. G minor and suggestions of C and D (subdominant and dominant) are sufficiently widespread during the rest of the movement to give some sense of a tonic key, although suggestions of functional progression are avoided. Motivic material is at first fragmented, but much of it is clearly related to (first movement) *b* material, most obviously in the minor/major third motifs of the piano's right hand part.

The first section is introductory, assembling a range of material (which I will call *A* material, Exx. 17-5a and b), while the second is defined largely by the presence of the thematic and harmonic elements in Ex. 17-5c (*B* material). *A* material reappears to separate statements of *B* material. The fluidity with which *A* and *B* alternate and support new material builds on the central movement of the Third String Quartet and the Trio Rhapsody. The assembly of motivic units and subsequent addition of more obviously melodic material is reminiscent of scherzo movements throughout Bridge's chamber music, with both *A* and *B* material developing freely and supporting more sustained melodic sections (*A* at [7] and [11], and the reappearance of *B* at [15] leading to a melodic

section based on a *B* derivative first encountered at [3]), lyrical ‘outgrowths’ that act almost as interludes. In this way Bridge’s early liking for scherzo and trio arrangement

Molto allegro (♩ = 160-168)

Ex. 17-5a: Piano Trio No. 2, second movement, bars 1 - 10

Ex. 17-5b: Piano Trio No. 2, second movement, bars 15 - 20

Ex. 17-5c: Piano Trio No. 2, second movement, bars 37 - 44

Ex. 17-6: Piano Trio No. 2, second movement, bars 390 - 394

is combined with the high level of motivic integration and fluidity of formal outlines typical of the later scherzi. The return of *B* in G minor ( $\boxed{19}^8$ ) leads quickly to a conclusion that seems to absorb the movement's opening chord into the tonic (Ex. 17-6). The whimsical nature of this slightest and simplest of resolutions (which resembles

the conclusion of the Trio Rhapsody) is entirely in keeping with the *scherzando* tone of the movement, obscuring its role as an agent of change and progress.

The characteristic juxtaposition of fragmentary motivic units and larger melodic spans here seems to reinforce the sense of an unusual ternary design, where the first section is expository and the central section is developmental with some rhapsodic tendencies. As in the previous movement, tonal and non-tonal elements are contrasted in a manner that precludes key-relationships from having more than the most basic significance; G minor is presented as being primary only in order to encourage a sense of harmonic movement when it is departed from and finally returned to. The fundamental contrast of triadic and non-triadic harmony is the more important distinction, creating simple parameters for 'harmonic conflict' with considerable scope for invention. The conflict of a 'stable' key area articulated by a mechanical device (*ostinato*) and a 'destabilising', wide-ranging element develops the opposition already observed in the first movement; the third movement provides an alternative combination of these elements, before the finale attempts a synthesis.

The slow movement is particularly economical in its material, and expands on previous elements. The introductory phrase (Ex. 17-7), for instance, relates back to motif *b2* (cf. Ex. 17-3), which is transformed into the movement's principal *ostinato*, *c* in Ex. 17-8. There are also occasional references to *a* motifs, as observed in the introductory phrase. The structure of the rest of the movement is ternary, ABA<sup>1</sup> plus coda, where A<sup>1</sup> is differentiated from its original statement most obviously through textural manipulation. All sections are highly harmonically and motivically integrated (creating yet another seemingly 'continuous' structure), featuring derivations of the 'extended Bridge chord' collection, and motivic elements given in Ex. 17-8. While harmony derives largely from a single superset, the types and presentation of subsets used in A and B sections are distinct, with A presenting subsets as minor chords with added degrees (derived from the 'shared mediant' polychord and Bridge chord), and B using subsets such as 6-34 and 6-21 approximating major-minor-seventh formations (Ex. 17-9). Here, then, the previously conflicting elements of 'stable' minor key *ostinato* and 'unstable' 8-27 harmony are combined, preparing for the dominance of 8-27 and extended Bridge chord harmony in the finale. Both whole-tone and octatonic collections intrude on occasion, but appear inconspicuous amid the harmonic fluidity. Whole-tone chords are embellished with trills at several points (relating them to 7-33,

Andante molto moderato ( $\text{♩} = 72$ )

Violin I: *con sordino*, *arco pp sempre*

Violin II: *con sordino*

Piano: *p dolce*, *b2*, *pp*, *pp sempre*

Ex. 17-7: Piano Trio No. 2, third movement, bars 1 - 4

Piano: *pp*, *dolcissimo*, *c*

Ex. 17-8: Piano Trio No. 2, third movement, piano, bars 6 - 10

Violin I: *p dolce*, *céléz*

Piano: *pp*, *c. p.*

Ex. 17-9: Piano Trio No. 2, third movement, piano and violin, bars 15 - 17

which also features), forming a 'whole tone plus two' collection similar to that observed in the central movement of the Third String Quartet (for instance before  $\boxed{3}$ ).

Symmetrical scales increase in frequency at the conclusion of the B section, once again utilising their 'unstable indeterminacy' as a sort of quasi-dominant preparing the return of A and its 'minor' chords ( $\boxed{5}$ ). As in previous instances, this treatment of non-functional harmonic material approximates typical structural functions of tonal



harmony, as a means of generating the tensions necessary to give a sense of propulsion to the substantial structures Bridge wanted to use. Although the use of an ostinato pattern and suggestions of minor chords relates to the 'stable' elements of the earlier movements, they are here thoroughly absorbed into the increasingly prominent 8-27 and extended Bridge chord collections, hinting at a continued progression away from the 'cold' and mechanical stability of *x*.

The coda appears to begin as a second B section, but is transformed after one bar (Ex. 17-10). The reintroduction of *a* motifs relates it to the brief introduction, and the addition of an E-B pedal (presented as a reorganised motif *c*) provides stability, relating to suggestions of E minor in the A sections. The use of octatonic chords in the first and third bars recalls the B section, as does the conclusion of the main part of the coda on a septachord suggesting another 'whole-tone plus two' collection. The last three bars of the movement recall material from the first A section, preparing the prominent use of major seconds between string parts found at the outset of the finale, and recalling such combinations in the first movement. The apparent stability provided by the persistent ostinato and E minor harmonic orientation is also a clear reference to the processes of the first movement. The third and fourth movements are linked, in a sense providing an alternate trajectory to the first and second: where the second movement acts as a diversion after the 'mechanical' rigour of the first, the fourth achieves a synthesis of elements that far surpasses the mere combination of elements in the third; this two-part structure is mirrored in the form of the finale.

**Più tranquillo**

Ex. 17-10: Piano Trio No. 2, third movement, bars 44 - 47

The final movement continues the harmonic preoccupations of the third, with widespread Bridge chord and 6-34 harmony, as well as occasional octatonic, whole-tone and 7-33 collections. These account for the majority of the harmonic material, direct references to the first movement aside. Bridge chords and 6-34 alternate to form the movement's principal theme (what I will call the 'finale theme', Ex. 17-11) after a short introduction featuring triplets. The Bridge chords in particular contribute to a more robust harmonic sound-world, including a number of types of 'extended' Bridge chords towards the end of the movement, where one or both triads are enriched by sevenths. The finale theme is related to the previous movements through the prominent minor/major third motif that opens it (A-F-F#). The arrangement of material is again fluid, with continuous development of material, forming a complex ternary form whose outer sections are themselves ternary, with sections of first-movement material being added to the last part thus (first-movement material in italics):

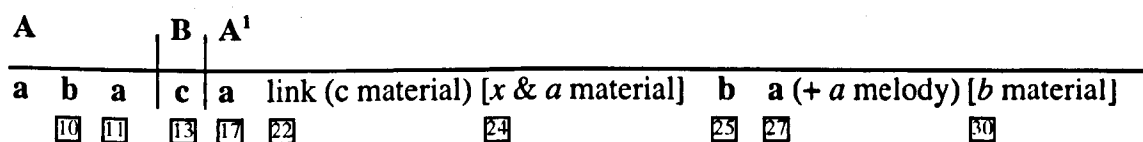
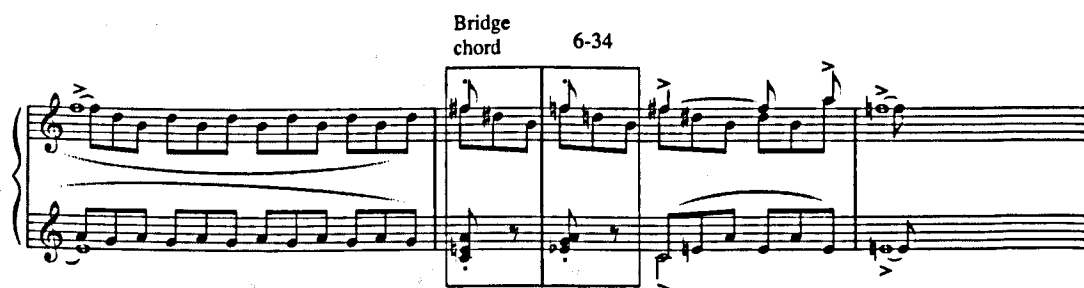


Fig. 17-1: Second Piano Trio, distribution of material in finale



Ex. 17-11: Piano Trio No. 2, fourth movement, piano, bars 9 - 11

Like the 'a' sections, 'b' (characterised by its 'walking bass' and melodic material derived from the first movement *a* motif, second bar of Ex. 17-12) also prioritises 8-27 harmony; in the B section, meanwhile, symmetrical scales (octatonic and whole-tone) increase in frequency, their presentation often approximating major-minor-seventh formations. Major-minor-seventh formations independent of previous harmony are

introduced towards the end of the section, maximising the harmonic contrast provided by the return of the finale theme (17), explicitly signalling a structural division. The B section (12 - 17) is characterised by more flowing melodic material and the continuous use of a 'horizontalised' version of the movement's introductory triplets (Ex. 17-13 shows both the initial introductory version and the form that opens the B section), alternating between piano and string parts. This distribution of material recalls the arrangement and treatment of *b* material in the first movement.

complete 8-27 collection

Ex. 17-12: Piano Trio No. 2, fourth movement, bars 34 - 36

Ex. 17-13a: Piano Trio No. 2, fourth movement, violin and cello, bars 1 - 2

Ex. 17-13b: Piano Trio No. 2, fourth movement, violin and piano, bars 62 - 64

If in the B section material is freely developed to provide contrast, in the A<sup>1</sup> section contrasting elements are synthesised with finale material. That said, the first interruption (*x* and *a* material, [24]) is entirely remote, a direct reference to the first movement and essentially outside the action of the finale, serving as a forceful reminder of the character and content of principal first-movement material. The link that precedes it recalls 'c' material, whose symmetrical (i.e. whole-tone and octatonic) collections are appropriate both as a linking device and to achieve maximum contrast with the *x* material that follows. The opposing forces that are ultimately synthesised are thus juxtaposed directly at this point. The section of *x* and *a* material is self-contained, and is followed by 'b' material, which is robust in character, with driving rhythmic content and a high proportion of Bridge chords; the presence of material derived from *a* within 'b' ensures continuity. Bridge chords continue to dominate in the following version of the finale theme (the final 'a' section), where they are extended through the addition of sevenths to the triads, over which the strings reintroduce *a* material. The presence of *a* in both sections following the first movement reference suggests a synthesis of elements which is made explicit in the final section.

The sudden interruption of (first movement) *b* material ([30]) leads to the conclusion of the work, absorbing *b* into the familiar 'extended Bridge chord', simply by adding a C# bass note (Ex. 17-14).<sup>45</sup> A similar manipulation had already taken place in the first movement ([6]<sup>3</sup>), although there it was presented as part of a process of destabilisation. Here it contributes to a final synthesis of elements, further enhanced by a reference to the harmonic material of *x* ([31]), similarly absorbed into the 'liberated' harmonic material of the last section (held together by the C# pedal, but freed from the rigidity of the first movement). Thematic and harmonic material continues to relate to *b*, with increasingly extravagant melodic outgrowths in all instrumental parts counteracting the 'mechanical' character of much previous melodic material (defined by its rigorous motivic economy), recasting it as lush and romantic, its treble trills and elaborate figurations suggesting an ecstatic pastoral idyll. Although a complete liberation from the icy rigidity of the first movement is not possible, a 'softening' and transcendence of the initial character has been achieved. A single last appearance of the finale theme

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<sup>45</sup> This is curiously reminiscent of Ravel's String Quartet (first movement, second subject), where the movement of the bass note down a minor third effects the necessary harmonic resolution.

closes the movement (complete with Bridge chord and 6-34 harmony, pivoting around a final pedal note, the strings' held B).

**Largamente e sostenuto (♩. = 52)**

Ex. 17-14: Piano Trio No. 2, fourth movement, bar 157

The implication here is that synthesis is achieved through the 'efforts' of what are initially destabilising elements, amounting to a profound musical meditation on the role of progressive forces and their potential integration into a productive dialectical process. The overall impression is one of transcendence, of having progressed beyond the limiting stability represented by the mechanical elements. This 'letting go' of mechanical stability to find a more worthwhile freedom is highly symbolic, indeed quasi-spiritual. An analogy with Bridge's own development as a composer, and his acceptance of its implications, may seem facile, but is perhaps not out of place.

The concluding reference to the finale theme is particularly apposite, as the finale is instrumental in fully recontextualising first movement material and its implications. The final abandonment of C# in favour of B is symbolic of this process, the C# pedal note no longer being felt to be necessary as a stabilising force. The unison string parts also contrast effectively with the many prominent major seconds throughout the work, most obviously the C#-B clash at the end of the first movement and the introductory triplets at the outset of the finale. The resulting structure is in some ways opposite to that observed in the Third String Quartet, achieving a convincingly logical 'anti-sonata', kindred in spirit to the Phantasie String Quartet, but unique in Bridge's oeuvre from a

technical point of view. It is his only (effectively) 'progressive' harmonic framework, where those elements that are initially construed as 'stable' do not ultimately prevail. A parallel with the Third String Quartet that effectively confirms the difference in outlook is the reference to first movement material in the finale. Where the Quartet uses a distinctly unstable reference to secondary material, the Trio recalls the stability of the opening, preparing for its synthesis with finale material.

\* \* \*

## Violin Sonata

The Violin Sonata dates from 1932, the last major work Bridge was to complete until 1937. It thus seems fitting that in it he combined and developed many of the principal elements of recent chamber works. Harmonic features in particular are developed further, and some elements of form and motivic-harmonic integration build on the Trio Rhapsody. Interestingly, the Bridge chord is present only in extended versions (it is Bridge's first post-tonal work not to use this sonority in a prominent role, reducing the polychordal flavour of the harmony), while complete 8-27 collections become more prominent. The use of tonal material also builds on the Second Piano Trio, as tonal stretches are integrated into a larger span with diverse harmonic elements.

As noted in chapter 2, the opening (Ex. 18-1) bears some resemblance to that of the E flat Sonata, composed almost 30 years previously, although the heroic tone of the early work is short-lived here. In fact, Bridge manipulates the traditional 'heroic protagonist' dynamic of the duo-sonata throughout the work, many of the violin's passages contrasting strongly with the lyrical tone of both the Cello Sonata and earlier E flat work. It is possible to view the trajectory of the Sonata as strongly characterised by the violin's 'embodied presence' refusing to conform to expected behaviour; the heroic tone of the opening is thus particularly significant as a frame of reference. The *Allegro energico* part of the introduction lasts only 7 bars, before the much more subdued (*Lento*) second part presents the first of much contemplative material. While the first part of the introduction consists largely of 8-27 harmony (for instance the complete

collection marked in Ex. 18-1), the second is entirely comprised of octatonic material, suggesting an unstable (i.e. 'quasi-dominant') role in a manner familiar from earlier works. The prominent minor second clashes of the opening (E-E# and C-C# and the interval content of motif *a*) point towards the greater emphasis on minor second content within chords throughout the work, exemplified by the choice of extended Bridge chord collections and complete 8-27 collections (with their bunching of semitones, largely avoided in earlier works), relating to the many highly chromatic sections, in which a large number of chromatic notes (often all twelve) are used within a short space.

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system, titled 'Allegro energico', shows the violin and piano parts for bars 1-11. Motif *a* is marked in the violin part, and motif *b* is marked in both parts. A large bracket labeled '8-27 (complete)' encompasses the piano accompaniment in this section. The second system continues the 'Allegro energico' section with motifs *b2* marked in both parts. The third system, titled 'Lento', begins with 'sempre f' and 'mf espress' markings. It features a 'lunga' note in the piano part and a section labeled 'octatonic' with 'mf dolce' and 'ten. sostenuta' markings.

Ex. 18-1: Violin Sonata, bars 1 - 11

The correlation of harmonic and motivic elements is demonstrated by the opening bars; the chords of the first bar, for instance, relate motivically to *a*, while combining two forms of the pervasive *b* (C-C#-E and C#-E-E#, both further examples of minor/major third motifs), forming a symmetrical chord identical to an 'extended *a*' collection noted in the Trio Rhapsody (the third form given in Ex. 16-3).<sup>46</sup> The immediate relation of *a* and *b* (bars 1 and 3), through the intervening motif (D#-E-G-E, bar 2), is particularly ingenious, integrating the strong opening gesture into an approach to the more structurally significant *b*, as the motivic outline of *a* is combined with the interval content of *b*. This is developed immediately into *b*<sub>2</sub>, suggesting a major triad with an added minor sixth, a recurring chord growing out of one of the most pervasive harmonic features of the work: the 'melodic minor' collection (a minor scale with sharpened sixth and seventh degrees; a different 'mode', a major scale with flattened sixth and seventh degrees, is also used). The resulting integration and coherence of principal elements is remarkable, building on the procedures of the Trio Rhapsody.

It is the 'melodic minor' collection that opens the first subject (*Allegro molto moderato*, Ex. 18-2), suggesting an A major tonal centre (i.e. with flattened sixth and seventh degrees, F and G), emphasised by the preceding octatonic dominant on E.<sup>47</sup> The intrusion of E in the third bar of the theme absorbs the harmonic orientation into a 7-33 collection, and harmony with a high level of whole-tone content persists throughout the subject. Octatonic harmony also occasionally intrudes, along with 8-27 harmony; both are most often presented in major-minor-seventh formations reminiscent of the Third String Quartet, initially absorbed into a more consistently tonal context (through the presence of strong melodic and bass formations suggestive of A major). More fluid chromaticism follows, however, undermining the violin's continued focus on A, primarily through reiterations of the thematic material given in Ex. 18-2. Renewed suggestions of stable tonality are introduced by a transitional interlude (Ex. 18-3), its direct relation to *c* (which precedes it in the violin part) suggesting a final, abrupt move away from A (initially to C minor). This transitional section relies heavily on the 'melodic minor' collection, matched by obvious motivic references to *b*. 'Melodic tension' generated by the violin's focus on primary motivic units and fragmented melodic material is released in a lyrical *appassionato* outburst at [11], preparing for the

<sup>46</sup> As the falling version is more prominent, I have labelled this, rather than the preceding (inverted: D#-E-G) instance, as the prime version of the motif.

<sup>47</sup> For a discussion of Bridge's use of melodic minor collections and their realignment as a 'major mode', see p. 246.



gentler lyricism of the second subject. This follows shortly, its harmonic content initially even more explicitly tonal (Ex. 18-4), beginning in A $\flat$  major, followed by a counterstatement in D major. In both cases, harmonic stability is eventually undermined by chromaticism and the reintroduction of octatonic harmony in particular – there is thus some movement towards stabilising tonality, but it is not lasting in this instance. A short *Lento* link (22) leads to the second section, fulfilling the role of slow movement.

**Allegro molto moderato**

Ex. 18-2: Violin Sonata, piano, bars 20 - 22

**a tempo moderato**

Ex. 18-3: Violin Sonata, piano, bars 62 - 64

**a tempo ben moderato**

Ex. 18-4: Violin Sonata, piano, bars 111 - 114

Although the principal material of the ternary slow section (Ex. 18-5), with its prominent minor second clashes, seems to occupy a different sound world, it is in fact strongly related to previous material. Motivically, the prominent dotted quaver figure is often suggestive of *c* (particularly in ascending instances), while the harmonic use of

almost exclusively ‘melodic minor’ collections relates the section directly to the transitional interlude and first subject. The slow section is substantial and certainly unique in its expressive content; the parallel quartal formations with prominent clashing seconds of the opening and the violin’s unmelodic interjections are unusual, while the torment of the last part is unrivalled in the chamber music. The entire slow section is unusual in its approach to melodic material, the texture of the opening seeming fragmented, and both instrumental parts growing increasingly restless in the subsequent segments (particularly the violin’s fluttering material after [29]), building to the impassioned outburst at [32]. The contrast with Bridge’s usual gentle, lyrical manner in slow sections could not be more pronounced. While tension is created by the prominent minor second clashes in the piano part, it is the proliferation of unsettled, often axial figures in both parts amid growing textural and dynamic intensity that creates instability. Tension is thus generated through primarily expressive devices (rather than the harmonic contrasts of the Third and Fourth String Quartets), imbuing the ‘soloist as protagonist’ dynamic with particular significance, suggesting specifically some sort of violent conflict or agitation. There is an obvious parallel here with *Oration*, both in the expressionistic sound world and the implication of the soloist as impassioned orator. The parallel is emphasised by the ensuing cadenza-like solo section, representing a further variation of the soloist’s ‘protagonist’ role.

Andante molto moderato rit.

Ex. 18-5: Violin Sonata, piano, bars 175 - 176

In the climactic final part of the section ([32]), primary harmonic material (i.e. the ‘melodic minor’ collection) is thus presented as a very remote-sounding region. The octatonic orientation of the brief central segment ([25] – [27]), meanwhile, provides an alternative opposition to that presented in the exposition, thoroughly appropriate to the remoteness of the slow movement as a whole. A connection with previous octatonic material, specifically the second part of the introduction, is created by a reference to the

*b*-derived figure of the piano part (either side of **26**, cf. **1**). Together with melodic/motivic derivatives of *a* and *c* (particularly in their second/seventh content) in the outer sections of the slow movement, this serves to maintain a sense of rigorous motivic logic and development of unstable elements (Fig. 18-1 gives an outline of the slow section).

<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>
<p><b>A</b> Chords with prominent minor second clashes in piano part; motivic fragments in violin part.</p> <p>'Melodic minor' collection</p>	<p><b>B</b> Contrasting material, referring to octatonic version of <i>b</i>.</p> <p>Octatonic</p>	<p><b>A'</b> Return of A material with increasingly agitated violin part, building to <i>fortissimo</i> outburst at <b>32</b>. References to <i>a</i> and <i>c</i>.</p> <p>'Melodic minor' collection</p>

Fig. 18-1: Violin Sonata, arrangement of material in slow section

The cadenza and a tranquil link (both recalling exposition motifs) diffuse some of the tension, leading to a scherzo section (**36**) that combines 8-27 collections with triads and other suggestions of tonality, for instance in the separation of elements of 8-27 collections (Ex. 18-6, which constitutes a single 8-27 collection). The alteration of one note to achieve a shift between octatonic and 8-27 collections (for instance B-B $\flat$ -B in the three bars before **38**) is characteristic, and reminiscent of the Third String Quartet (first movement, second subject, see pp. 245 and 261). The suggestion of tonality arising from this mode of presentation is developed into short tonal stretches (for instance at **49**), linking in a fluid manner with the surrounding 8-27 material. Motivic integration is characteristically rigorous, with considerable development of the piano's semiquaver pattern given in Ex. 18-6, and a number of thematic references to exposition material. The introduction of sustained melody over more fragmented material in the central part of the scherzo is typical, in this instance (**43**) recalling the lyrical material from the transition. In the outer parts, however, the violin part is defined largely by repetitive semiquaver patterns, continuing Bridge's exploration of textural combinations avoiding the traditional 'melody and accompaniment' dynamic. Even in more sustained sections, fragmentation and the use of axial melodies create an effect strongly differentiated from the lyricism of the tonal works combining strings and piano.

Ex. 18-6: Violin Sonata, bars 283 - 289

Explicit references to the opening of the work appear after 48, preparing for the apparent overlap of scherzo and recapitulation of first subject material at 51. The reference to the slow section at this point serves to tie the three sections together (Ex. 18-7). The pervasive minor/major third motif of the outer sections is expanded to a diminished/perfect fifth in the slow section and scherzo; the correlation is emphasised at this point, where the opening chord (the symmetrical extended *b* chord) is replaced by a series of chords reminiscent of the slow section (piano part, cf. Ex. 18-5).

Ex. 18-7: Violin Sonata, bars 405 - 408

After a period of first subject recapitulation, a fusion of unstable first subject, transition and second subject material takes place. This contains the most substantial section based entirely on one complete 8-27 collection (nine bars, 57 – 58), and is concluded by a highly chromatic section, in which all twelve chromatic notes are often presented in close succession, juxtaposed with suggestions of tonal material (particularly melodic minor collections). An E $\flat$  melodic minor collection concludes the section, leading to an A major statement of the lyrical, tonal part of the second subject, recalling the fundamental opposition of melodic minor and major mode material. The E $\flat$  and A areas are linked by a single bar of 6-34 harmony (63<sup>-1</sup>) containing the dominants of both keys, reminiscent of Bridge's earlier tonal use of 6-34 in the manner of both dominant and French sixth, linking and absorbing divergent harmonic elements in a suggestion of functional harmony. Significantly, the second subject recapitulation begins with a melodic G $\sharp$ , the enharmonic equivalent of the A $\flat$  of the exposition, emphasising its role as leading note, whose goal is reached only in the final bar. The sense of tonality of this apotheosised recapitulatory statement is again disrupted by chromaticism, but is simultaneously maintained through the presence of strong bass lines, first chromatic, then featuring prolonged dominant and tonic pedals. A final *Tempo I* coda seemingly abandons the fixation on A until the last bar, but is nevertheless synthetic in character, as it revisits material from the introduction, relating it to A, playing particularly on the centrality of motif *b*. The tonal aspects of the work thus suggest a simple adaptation of sonata structure, A major being suggested at the outset of the first subject, synthesised with the pervasive melodic minor harmonic element, the second subject departing from the tonic in the exposition but aligning itself in the recapitulation. The continued prominence of A as the work draws to a close maintains a sense of stability, as the 'melodic minor' element is absorbed into the primary harmonic area (balancing the function of that collection as a destabilising force in the exposition and subsequently).

The harmonic structure of the work represents a development of processes already observed in the Third String Quartet and Second Piano Trio, with tonal and octatonic elements at opposite ends of the stable-unstable spectrum; as before, 8-27 harmony in various guises occupies a position between these poles, including an unprecedented use of complete 8-27 collections and the melodic minor collection. As noted, obvious Bridge chords are not used (although they are occasionally suggested in the harmony,

often in extended forms), suggesting that Bridge was keen to reduce his reliance on this sonority, or at least to experiment with a harmonic palette that did not prioritise it. As in the Second Piano Trio, primary elements are gradually revealed in a process of crystallisation (or indeed clarification) rather than resolution. This is aided by rigorous motivic integration and the strong characterisation of themes/sections, where the inner sections are clearly episodic in character. A sense of maintained tension is ensured by references to unstable elements encountered in the exposition. Significantly, the pastoral tone of the stable part of the second subject is instrumental in imparting a sense of resolution during the recapitulation, due in no small part to the rearrangement of its thematic/harmonic elements, in a manner not unlike that of Bridge's sonata-arches (Fig. 18-2). Again, this is aided by the role of the violin as 'lyrical protagonist', here adopting a somewhat sentimental tone, whose conventional lyricism is a relief after the unsettled and fragmented material of the inner sections. This and the heroic tone of the opening are presented almost as caricatures, contrasting starkly with much of the remaining material; it is as if the traditional gendered opposition is mocked and undermined by the remaining material.

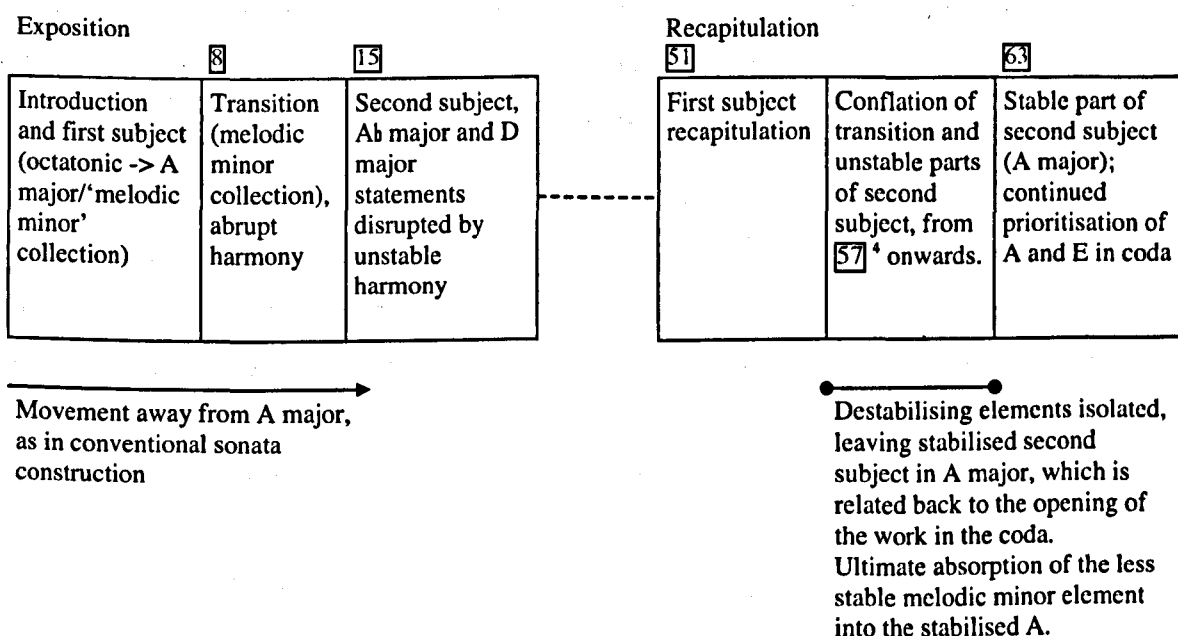


Fig. 18-2: Violin Sonata, exposition and recapitulation

The ironic treatment of material that is construed as being both stabilising and somehow conventional relates to the Trio Rhapsody, and again its effect is in some ways unsatisfactory. (Perhaps there is also a parallel with earlier second subject areas whose remote, 'escapist' tendencies prevented them from acting directly on their surroundings; the addition of an ironic 'lens' results in a more direct, pragmatic potency while nevertheless maintaining a sense of distance.) It is, however, not the arrival at stability that is significant, but the ensuing preservation of stability and synthesis of primary elements. The episodic nature of the work (held together by motivic and harmonic integration) actually strengthens the sense of structural closure, as the vivid characterisation and contrast of material emphasises the sense of a 'stabilised return' in the last pages, adding considerable weight to the somewhat tenuous processes of structural resolution. The Violin Sonata is thus Bridge's only work in which the emotional journey of an embodied presence (in the most abstract sense) is instrumental in ensuring logical closure.

The Violin Sonata was to be Bridge's last substantial work for some time, as he grappled with a number of aborted works and was plagued by illness. In his last chamber works, the *Divertimenti* for wind instruments and the Fourth String Quartet, both the opposition of tonal and non-tonal material and harmonic-motivic integration are developed further, and a number of new elements contribute to a more robust sound-world, based as much on contrast as on synthesis.

## 7 – Late Works, 1937-1941

Paul Hindmarsh calls Bridge's last period his 'classical phase', and Anthony Payne notes of the Fourth Quartet that 'the language has moved away from the expressionist richness of its predecessor: a more classical vision is outlined by the concentrated statements, concise transitions, and increased economy of texture'.<sup>1</sup> Of the late works, the *Allegro moderato*, the first movement of a projected symphony for string orchestra, is perhaps the most obviously 'classical' in tone, the modest forces (as in the earlier Suite) leading to a more restrained idiom than that typically found in the orchestral music; the resulting style is in many ways strongly related to that of the chamber music. The concentrated expression, economy of means and forces, and the emphasis on contrast between strongly characterised sections all suggest a certain classicism, perhaps not unlike that found in the late works of both Debussy and Ravel.<sup>2</sup> Links with neo-classicism might also be identified, although the aesthetic implications of such a comparison would be problematic (a neo-classical influence at one remove, through contemporary British music for strings such as Bliss's *Music for Strings*, might not be too far-fetched to merit consideration).

The romanticism of *Rebus* might at first glance appear to contradict the 'classical' trend of the surrounding works, but its good humour, optimism and clarity fit into the wider trend, combined here with the generally romantic-expressive tone of Bridge's orchestral music; the retreat from the expressionism of *Oration* is obvious. The title of the first work under consideration here, the *Divertimenti* for flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon, makes explicit reference to a specifically Classical genre, although one wonders whether Bliss's *Conversations* may have provided a more recent inspiration (even if Bridge found Bliss's brand of modernism suspect).<sup>3</sup> It is characterised by simply delineated structures with strong contrasts, and in these characteristics it is matched by the Fourth String Quartet. Of course, both works also relate strongly to the previous group of chamber works, but a new sense of clarity and concentration

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<sup>1</sup> Hindmarsh, 'Frank Bridge – Centenary Survey' (part two); Payne, *Frank Bridge – radical and conservative*, 91.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the former, see Marianne Wheeldon, *Debussy's Late Style* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> I will consider the *Divertimenti* before the Fourth String Quartet even though the latter was completed marginally earlier, as most of the *Divertimenti* were written before the completion of the Quartet: the inner movements had originally occupied Bridge in 1934, and the first movement was completed several months before the Quartet.



separates the last works from the 1927-32 period. As mentioned in the 'Note on Harmony' in the previous chapter, a number of new harmonic elements are introduced, often in conjunction with demonstrative harmonic-motivic integration. In the *Divertimenti* this is often particularly obvious, for instance in the inner movements – both of which feature only two instruments, necessitating a horizontal articulation of harmony – as well as in prolonged octatonic stretches. In the first movement of the Fourth String Quartet, the 'all-interval' tetrachord (4-Z15) and related collections found in the first subject are strongly integrated, harmonically and motivically. The ultimate treatment of this material – as a basic gesture that is felt to be unsatisfactory and must be transcended – has some similarity with the corresponding material of the Second Piano Trio, but instead of suggesting a sense of cold stability, it evinces a harsh and indifferent chaos. Although its tone approaches the expressionism of the Third Quartet, the emphasis of contrast over synthesis is in keeping with the technical and hence aesthetic trends already mentioned. In the last period, then, elements of previous works are used to articulate a new clarity, combining with some new elements.

The regained optimism, or at least gritty determination, of several of the last works is also notable, contrasting starkly with the emotive expressionism and octatonic half-lights of the Third String Quartet, the volatility of the Violin Sonata, or what Payne describes as 'a brand of English expressionism for which there are no precedents', characterised by 'a haunted beauty, bizarre and sometimes fearful', in *Phantasm*.<sup>4</sup> The most obvious precursor is the Trio Rhapsody, looking ahead to the good humour of the *Divertimenti* and Fourth String Quartet finale. The emotional context of this new optimism is complex, apparently stemming from Bridge's relief at being able to compose again after suffering from serious heart problems in the second half of 1936, being close to death for several days. His apparent dismay at the worsening political situation in Europe and the prospect of another 'bellicose and devastating experience' is difficult to detect in much of the late music.<sup>5</sup> If it finds expression in the opening of the Fourth String Quartet, it is short lived and is absorbed into the optimistic conclusion (Bridge's observation that 'The harmony of the country is pretty distant from the key of C major!' contrasts with the protracted C major sections of the Fourth Quartet finale).<sup>6</sup> Bridge's reaction to the War was to become more significant in relation to *Rebus* (and

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<sup>4</sup> Payne, *Frank Bridge – radical and conservative*, 100.

<sup>5</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 28 November 1935.

<sup>6</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 8 February 1936.

perhaps the Symphony for Strings), but it seems to have had little bearing on the *Divertimenti* and Fourth String Quartet, the playfulness of the former in particular looking back to Bridge's early music. As already noted, the Fourth Quartet has some parallels with the Second, and the Third and Fourth Quartets relate in similar ways to the First and Second. The obvious difference is the tone of the opening, whose violence takes Bridge's expressionism to its logical conclusion, expressively and in its structural implications.

\* \* \*

### Divertimenti

(i) *Prelude (Allegro animato ma non troppo)*

(ii) *Nocturne (Poco lento)*

(iii) *Scherzetto (Allegro gajo)*

(iv) *Bagatelle (Allegro con moto)*

A set of two *Divertimenti* for flute and oboe first occupied Bridge in 1934, and revised versions of these eventually became the inner movements of the present four pieces for flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon. In June 1938 he wrote to Coolidge that he had been contemplating such a work for some time before 1934: 'It's funny how a conversation with Barrère struck a germ in my mind as long ago as Chicago 1930'.<sup>7</sup> The processes and stylistic characteristics of the older and newer movements are similar, although the conclusion of the last moves away from the fragile (perhaps artificial) types of closure presented in the previous movements, appropriately for the whimsical, transient 'diversion' he was aiming to create. There is considerable wit and joy in these short movements, a welcome return of the good humour of the early period after the searching seriousness of the transitional and progressive works. While obviously lacking the dissonant violence and structural tensions of the preceding group of works, the 'light-hearted' manner is also emphasised by local melodic, phrase and harmonic

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<sup>7</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 2 June 1938. Georges Barrère (1876-1944) was a famous French flautist who had moved to New York in 1905, where he played with the New York Symphony Orchestra and various chamber ensembles.

structures that feature sharp contrasts, emphasising the boisterous wit of the extroverted expressive content. The choice of instruments is also significant, the unusual combination (for Bridge) allowing him to explore structures and expressive elements not suitable for the 'serious' string quartet; when Coolidge suggested a performance by a string quartet (as a performance on wind instruments could not be arranged), Bridge resolutely objected. Perhaps there is a parallel here with the *Trio Rhapsody*, particularly in the reduced textures of the inner movements, the instrumentation facilitating a creative approach to stylistic-expressive tropes freed from the requirements of more 'venerable' forms. The results evidently satisfied Bridge: 'They come off mightily well I'm glad to say. Which means I am quite pleased with them even if nobody else is!'<sup>8</sup>

A number of important characteristics unify the four movements, principally the use of simple background structures that are enlivened by fragmented phrase structures, irregular melodic spans and unified motivic and harmonic material that is freely developed, smoothing over structural divisions at both phrase and formal levels (all four movements suggest an overriding ternary design). The brevity of the movements makes possible an unpredictably whimsical approach to the harmonic articulation of structure, which is instrumental in giving the work the character of a set of 'diversions'.

The opening *Prelude* is characteristic in its treatment of simultaneously unified and freely developing material, and the tension created between superficially complex construction played out against a simple background scheme. From the aimless triadic harmony of the opening (Ex. 19-1) and the subsequent octatonic interruption (both consisting almost exclusively of vertical major thirds) emerges the first suggestion of

**Allegro animato ma non troppo M.M. ♩ = 104**

Ex. 19-1: *Divertimenti*, (i) *Prelude*, bars 1 - 4

complete octatonic collection

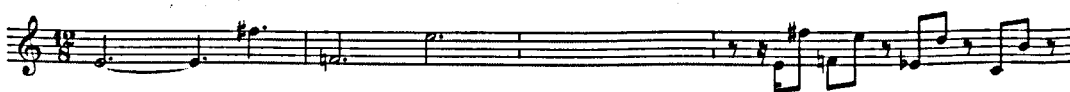
<sup>8</sup> Letter to Britten, 25 July 1939.



Ex. 19-2: *Divertimenti*, (i) *Prelude*, bassoon, bars 31 - 32

C# (minor). This key centre is maintained and returned to for a substantial portion of the movement, in various modes and contexts. It overlaps with the formal division between the common-time 'A' material and the compound-time 'B' material (whose principal thematic fragment is given in Ex. 19-2), but is abandoned at  $\boxed{8}$ , when it is dislodged by the reintroduction of octatonic harmony and 'A' material. This is developed freely, with a number of extremely brief (two-bar) interruptions of the 'B' theme, which highlight the prominence of major seconds in all of the principal motivic material. The conclusion closely reflects the opening, recreating the initial deflection from an F or C major orientation to B major with interspersed octatonic harmony. The final gesture in particular links with the first bar, the clarinet and bassoon's C major interjections resolving into the held B major chord.

The two inner movements each feature only two of the available instruments, and the *Nocturne*, for flute and oboe, is particularly notable for its contrapuntal texture and correlation of motivic and harmonic content. As in the subsequent movement, the principal material of the main sections is closely related; Ex. 19-3 gives the opening motif and its extended version that opens the B section. The harmony of the movement is difficult to analyse minutely due to its contrapuntal, two-part texture, but a number of basic elements are easily identified: the opening motif is emblematic of the chromatic (i.e. semitonal) nature of much of the material, exemplified by the descending chromatic lines of the B section; other material, meanwhile, suggests octatonic harmony, an implication confirmed by the interpolation of entirely octatonic material between B and the return of A ( $\boxed{5}$ – $\boxed{6}$ ), which features the polychordal presentation of triads contained in a single octatonic collection, recalling the first movement. Both chromatic and octatonic elements emphasise the notes E and A, which provide stability at the conclusion of the movement.



Ex. 19-3: *Divertimenti*, (ii) *Nocturne*, oboe, bars 1 - 2; flute, bar 19

The subsequent *Scherzettino* for clarinet and bassoon is, typically, the most motivically integrated of the *Divertimenti*, with four continuous sections developing the material of the opening phrase (Ex. 19-4 shows the initial phrase and some of the derivations – the first from *y*, the others from *x*, rearranging motivic elements while maintaining fingerprints such as rhythm and outline). Each section opens with a variation of the opening phrase in its original configuration. The central sections (starting at  $\boxed{6}$  and  $\boxed{10}$ <sup>5</sup>) develop material progressively, the third section being the only one not to begin with the opening pitches. Like the first movement, the harmony consists of an interplay between (principally) non-functional triadic and octatonic material, moving away from the initial suggestion of D major (again approached obliquely) only to be re-established in the concluding section ( $\boxed{15}$ ). This process is considerably more emphatic than in the first movement, with the basson's D pedal note beneath the clarinet's shifting triadic harmony also emphasising the polychordal aspects of the movement's harmony, which features Bridge chords and Bridge chord variants. As in the first movement, the final cadence recalls the opening, presenting the opening chord as an unstable approach to D major.

Ex. 19-4a: *Divertimenti*, (iii) *Scherzetto* (Bb clarinet & bassoon), bars 1 - 4

Ex. 19-4b: *Divertimenti*, (iii) *Scherzetto*: bassoon, bars 13 - 14; bassoon, bars 19 - 20; bassoon, bar 23; clarinet (as sounding), bar 26; bassoon, bar 64

The final *Divertimento* (*Bagatelle*) curiously inverts the procedures of the previous movement, with harmony being almost entirely uniform amid some motivic/thematic contrast. The majority of the harmonic material consists of the manipulations of octatonic collections typical of Bridge's music, including 9-10 (an octatonic collection

with one added note), 8-27, and their subsets (Ex. 19-5, for instance, uses a single 9-10 collection). A two-bar introductory gesture is followed by the principal motivic/thematic idea (Ex. 19-5), which is interrupted immediately by contrasting material (□). These segments alternate twice, followed by the development of material from the contrasting idea (Ex. 19-6), which constitutes a distinct middle section (albeit one closely related to the surrounding ‘principal’ sections, as in previous movements). The return of principal material (□□) in a form resembling the introductory gesture initiates a short arch-shaped concluding section: introductory phrase – principal idea – contrasting material – principal idea – introductory phrase. The form of the entire movement can be summarised thus:

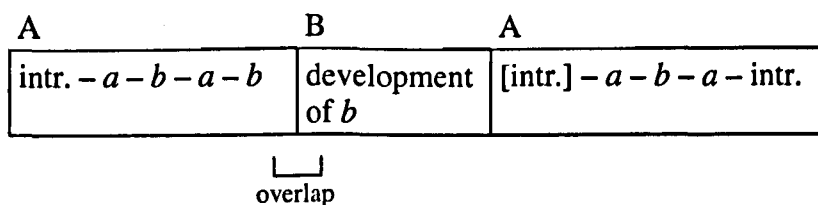


Fig. 19-1: *Divertimenti: (iv) Bagatelle*, form of movement

The overlap of material between A and B perhaps recalls similar procedures observed in the previous movements. There is also a curious similarity in the manner in which the movements end, with the rearrangement of opening material achieving closure. In the *Bagatelle* the sense of closure is superficial, the capricious ending underlining the inconsequential ‘divertimento’ manner that Bridge evidently wanted to achieve (‘they achieve what they were expected to do’).<sup>9</sup> There are no complex structural processes at work here, no profound philosophical implications. The ‘incidental’ C-G ending (following an F#) is surely deliberate, recalling the opening and conclusion of the first movement, and perhaps also the bare E-A ending of the second.

The balance of contrast and unity is delicately handled, with a result that is unique in Bridge’s output, although the arrangement of material and resulting structural relationships within a limited scale perhaps recall aspects of the *Idylls*. It is interesting that the first two movements were completed before the Fourth String Quartet, the third on the same day as the Quartet and the fourth some months later. After the effortful

<sup>9</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 26 February 1939.

Quartet, the inconsequential flippancy of the final *Divertimento* must surely have appealed to Bridge, and its conclusion emphasises this aspect by refusing to attempt any real sense of closure – indeed, it is even more open-ended than the previous movements.

**Allegro con moto**

Fl *p*

Ob *p* *p sempre*

Clar (Bb) *p*

Bsn *p*

The first system of the score shows four staves. The Flute part begins with a dynamic of *p*. The Oboe part also starts with *p* and continues with *p sempre*. The Clarinet (Bb) and Bassoon parts also begin with *p*. The music is in 3/4 time and features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Ex. 19-5: *Divertimenti*, (iv) *Bagatelle*, bars 1 - 7

*mf dolce* *cresc.* *f* *pp leggero*

*mf dolce* *cresc.* *f* *pp leggero*

The second system of the score shows two staves. The Flute part features dynamics of *mf dolce*, *cresc.*, *f*, and *pp leggero*. The Oboe part also features *mf dolce*, *cresc.*, *f*, and *pp leggero*. The music continues with similar rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings.

Ex. 19-6: *Divertimenti*, (iv) *Bagatelle*, bars 40 - 43

## String Quartet No. 4

(i) *Allegro energico*

(ii) *Quasi Minuetto*

(iii) *Adagio ma non troppo – Andante con moto – Allegro con brio*

The Fourth Quartet was composed in a relatively short space of time, particularly when one considers that Bridge was still recovering from severe illness. Some of the elation at his recovery and regained ability to work may well have influenced the work's ultimate optimism; two months before beginning work he wrote to Coolidge: 'My getting well, as you say, seems a miracle. I hope soon to be as well as ever I was, and I shall be when I can use my head again.'<sup>10</sup>

Bridge had already mentioned work on a string quartet in July 1936: 'I wanted so much to send you something that the South Mountain Quartet might play for you, but the damned thing won't go where I want it to, and as fast as it progresses I slash it to bits and begin again,' possibly referring to an earlier attempt represented by an incomplete sketch held in the RCM collection (H. 187), and clearly demonstrating that Bridge was occupied with a string quartet before his illness.<sup>11</sup> This struck in October, by which time Bridge appears not to have made satisfactory progress on the movement, the existing sketches consisting of a series of false starts. As already noted, the Fourth Quartet was composed quickly (between the end of April and the beginning of November 1937, during which period he also revised and completed the first three *Divertimenti*), making it unlikely that the aborted movement dates from this time. It also seems unlikely that it was composed after the Fourth Quartet, suggesting that it is indeed the piece referred to by Bridge in his letter to Coolidge. While the Fourth Quartet thus seems to be independent of the earlier attempt, there are compelling links, and there is some justification in considering the aborted movement an immediate precursor to the completed work. There are, for instance, definite parallels between the opening material and the principal motifs of the Fourth Quartet's first movement, particularly the opening gesture (compare, for instance,  $x$  and  $y$  in Ex. 20-1 with  $a1$  and  $a2$  in Exx. 20-2 and 20-3:  $x$  is a three-note subset of all-interval tetrachord 4-Z15 and  $y$  features a conspicuous bunching of semitones at the bottom, cf. the normal form of  $a2$ ,

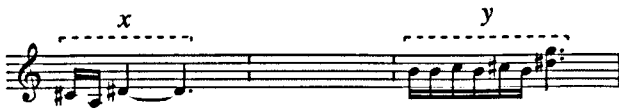
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<sup>10</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 22 February 1937.

<sup>11</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 21 July 1936.



given in Ex. 20-3). The presentation of *x*, on its own, as a dramatic opening statement also looks ahead to the completed work.



Ex. 20-1: Aborted string quartet movement (H187), opening motifs

The Fourth Quartet opens with a forthright statement of the movement's principal motivic and harmonic elements (Ex. 20-2). The integration of motivic and harmonic material is especially striking here; *a1* and *a2* in particular yield collections that inform much of the ensuing harmony, which is differentiated from Bridge's earlier harmonic preferences to a significant extent. Octatonic, whole-tone and 8-27 collections, and extended Bridge chord harmony (bar 5) can all be observed, but much of the first subject is dominated by motifs *a* and *b*, and harmony derived from them. Normal forms of *a1* and *a2* are given in Ex. 20-3, illustrating the 'chord of all intervals', *a1*, and the bunching of semitones in *a2*; chordal variants of *a1* and *a2* can be observed on the first beats of bars 8 and 9 and last beats of bars 7 and 8, respectively. As mentioned in the 'Note on Harmony' in the last chapter, embellished versions of *a1* also appear, sometimes resembling *a2* in their resulting density, the second beat of bar 6 being an example (with grace notes: B-C-C#-D-E $\flat$ -F). Chords based on *b* also occur – i.e. so-called 'major/minor tetrachords' – as well as triads with other added degrees creating a semitone clash: augmented fourth and minor sixth, minor second and major seventh. As on previous occasions there is a fundamental affinity with Bridge's favourite minor/major third motif.

Some relief from the discordant, chaotic sound-world created by this material is provided by the occasional suggestions of triadic harmony and octatonicism of the transition, which grows directly out of the first subject (I consider  $\boxed{4}$  to be a closing/linking section, the transition proper beginning at  $\boxed{5}$ ); 8-27 harmony, including a complete collection in the eighth bar of the transition, also features. Although a prominent all-interval tetrachord opens the transition section, recalling the reiteration of principal harmonic material at the corresponding point in the Second String Quartet,

Tempo I [♩ = 120]  
Allegro energico

The score for the first movement is in 3/4 time with a tempo of 120 beats per minute. It features four staves. The first two staves (Violin I and Violin II) have dynamic markings of *f*, *mf*, and *cresc.*. The third and fourth staves (Viola and Cello/Double Bass) also have *f*, *mf*, and *cresc.* markings. There are two specific articulation marks labeled *a1* and *a2* with dashed lines indicating their duration across the staves.

Tempo II [♩ = 104]

The score for the second movement is in 3/4 time with a tempo of 104 beats per minute. It features four staves. The first two staves (Violin I and Violin II) have performance instructions of *pizz.* and *arco*. The third and fourth staves (Viola and Cello/Double Bass) also have *pizz.* and *arco* instructions. There are two specific articulation marks labeled *b* and *c* with dashed lines indicating their duration across the staves.

Ex. 20-2: String Quartet No. 4, first movement, bars 1 - 9

This diagram shows two horizontal lines representing the normal forms of articulation marks *a1* and *a2*. Each mark consists of a dashed line above a solid line, indicating the duration of the articulation.

Ex. 20-3: String Quartet No. 4, normal forms of *a1* and *a2*

there is a continued octatonic flavour, looking ahead to the complete 8-27 collection. These harmonic features now assume a role of transition between the clashing sonorities of the first subject and the suggestions of tonality in the second (prefigured by the transition's arrival at E minor in the second- and third-last bars).

Although strongly differentiated in character, second subject material is subtly linked to the preceding music, its characteristic 'major-to-minor' inflections (the flattening of notes, often suggestive of a change from major to minor mode, although degrees such as the ostensible second and fifth are also flattened on occasion) relating

directly to motif *b*, a version of which immediately precedes the second subject (Ex. 20-4); in this form its interval content also approximates *a2*, with the bunching of semitones B-C-C#-D-D# and perfect fifth above the 'base' of this bunching (F#). The link thus explicitly relates elements of the first subject to the second, whose stabilising influence eventually helps to overcome the expressionistic instability of the opening material. *b* mediates between these positions.

Moderato [♩ = 88]

Ex. 20-4: String Quartet No. 4, first movement, bars 53 - 59

Counterstatements of the main second subject theme (6, 7, 11) are separated by disruptive *animato* sections that develop a number of the second subject's principal elements (Ex. 20-5a – motif *d* is particularly prominent throughout the second subject), while also making reference to the first subject, principally through motifs *c* and *a1*. The intrusion of first subject material is prefigured in bars 7-9 of the main second subject theme (where *a1* features in the harmony and melody, Ex. 20-5b; interlocking *a1* variants also appear in the violin parts), and is unique in Bridge's second subjects after the early C minor Piano Quartet. These tend to stand apart from the drama of first

subject areas; here, Bridge appears to want to emphasise the contrast between subjects by allowing one to disrupt the other, a procedure also familiar from, for instance, the intrusion of first movement material into the slow movement of the Piano Quintet. There is perhaps also a sense that, through the violent interruptions, the stability of the second subject theme has yet to assert itself fully – it is as yet emergent. Unlike the second subject of the Third String Quartet, stable and unstable elements are separated out and contrasted here, with suggestions of tonality and octatonic elements suggesting opposing positions. In this way the more stable elements of the subject area can help to establish stability more easily later on in the work (as in the Violin Sonata). The alternation of theme and interruption makes for an unusually elaborate second subject:

6	8	11	13 <sup>2</sup>	14
Two initial statements of theme, with brief interruption ( <i>al</i> )	Developmental interruption, with <i>c</i> and <i>al</i> ; some octatonicism)	Counterstatement of theme in G	Second brief interruption, initially octatonic, then returning to G	Closing, G major

Fig. 20-1: String Quartet No. 4, first movement, structure of second subject

Animato [ $\text{♩} = 104$ ]

Ex. 20-5a: String Quartet No. 4, first movement, bars 74 - 77

Ex. 20-5b: String Quartet No. 4, first movement, bars 60 - 63

While often tonal in appearance, a number of Bridge's favoured post-tonal harmonies also feature in the second subject, leading to a sense of advanced chromaticism; the disruptive, developmental subsections are unstable, featuring prominent octatonic harmony. The result is not unlike the sense of fluid chromaticism within areas of tonality already observed in the *Divertimenti* (and indeed parts of the Violin Sonata). The main theme, meanwhile, consists of a melody perhaps unrivalled in length and variety in Bridge's music. Its lyricism goes some way towards maintaining a sense of direction amid fluctuating harmony, and hence has some similarity with the role and character of the corresponding melodic material of the Third String Quartet. As we will see, its idyll, somewhat hesitant here, is transformed and hence challenged in an unprecedented manner in the finale.

The development follows seamlessly from the closing phrase, but the ostensible derivation of the second subject (15) is short-lived, being interrupted by *b*. This alternation of first and second subject material continues for the rest of the development, the use of 'developmental' second subject material blurring the separation of exposition and development. *al* and *b* continually interrupt, however, and much of the harmony stems from the first subject, including octatonic and 8-27 collections, and prominent harmony derived from the two motifs just mentioned. *a* and *b* return in forms closely approximating the opening of the movement, an augmented version of which heralds the recapitulation (22). As in many earlier instances, the first subject and transition are condensed; the second subject (26) is also varied, mainly through the transposition of material, leading to the prioritisation of F, rather than G, in the later

stages of the recapitulation. The form of the second subject is otherwise similar to that described in the exposition. The effect of this transposition amid highly chromatic harmony is slight, but bears some relation to the earlier harmonic arches: the opening of the second subject recapitulation, centred around  $C_b$  rather than  $C$ , seems remote, or is retrospectively viewed as remote once we have reached  $G$  (briefly) and  $F$ , the latter progression perhaps suggesting a further relaxation.

A return of first subject material ( $\boxed{33}$ ) is at first suggestive of the sort of closure observed in the corresponding part of the Third String Quartet. Polychordal combinations (first  $D_b$  minor and  $C$  minor, then  $D_b$  minor,  $C$  major and  $b$  in  $E_b$ , together forming a complete 8-27 collection,  $\boxed{33}^4$ ) lead to a variant of the extended Bridge chord originally found in bar 5. The effect is masterful, playing heavily on the timbral characteristics of the chord and its spacing. The open  $C$  of the cello and resonant rendering of  $b$  in  $D$  major contrast considerably with the preceding chord, achieving a powerful link with the similarly resonant chord in bar 5 – there is no doubt that it is the same chord; in other words, its primacy is asserted largely through timbre. Rather than conclusively establishing this as the primary stable element, however, further treatment of first subject motifs leads eventually to a  $D$  pedal ( $\boxed{35}^3$ ) and references to the second subject, and it is a  $D$  major chord (with added sixth and ninth degrees) that concludes the movement. This ‘victory’ of  $D$  major is symbolic – Bridge has simply chosen to move beyond the expressionist chaos of the first subject;  $b$ , through its initial  $D$  major incarnation and its connection with the second subject, might thus be understood as an agent of stability, a stabilising force that makes possible the transcendence of its original context. The final approach to  $D$  major bears an interesting resemblance to the final cadence in *Oration*, the progression from  $C$  minor to  $D$  major suggesting a resolution of the tensions contained within the polychordal Bridge chord (in *Oration* it is a variant,  $E_b$  major to  $D$  major). This further strengthens the impression that it is the first subject that requires resolution rather than the second, suggesting a profound re-imagining of sonata principles, undoubtedly derived from the Second Piano Trio and prefigured in the Trio Rhapsody and Violin Sonata. In the new scheme, it is the instability of the first subject’s expressionist violence that must be resolved; in  $b$ , the material carries within it a seed capable of bringing about resolution. The second subject (and by extension the development) is an exploration of a stabilising force, although its power is at this point insufficient to achieve complete resolution.  $D$  major

represents a fresh and 'bright' ending, transcendental in a manner similar to the conclusion of the Phantasy Piano Quartet (perhaps the first *Divertimento*, completed only a few days after the first movement of the Quartet, is also related). For now, stability is simply asserted; it will be consolidated in the finale.

Not unlike the central nocturne/intermezzo movement of the Third String Quartet, the *Quasi Minuetto* elaborates on a number of elements of the first movement; there is also some kinship with the inner movements of the Second Piano Trio, as the Minuet prepares for the stabilising elements of the finale. The generic reference to the Minuet is not only 'Classical' in import, but further relates to earlier stylistic-generic tropes such as the elegy. Triads with added degrees creating semitone clashes are in evidence from the opening (for instance the first chord), which consists of a nine-bar introduction, followed by the first theme (Ex. 20-6). The phrase structure is unusual, with two introductory bars followed by a four bar phrase. This 'phrase' (i.e. beginning on the third bar of the theme) opens with the most pervasive rhythmic element of the

The musical score consists of two systems of four staves each. The first system (bars 10-13) is marked *p espress.* and *pizz.* with dynamics *p* and *mf*. The second system (bars 14-16) is marked *legato* and *Tempo giusto* with dynamics *f* and *mp*. A 'triad motif' is indicated in the second system. 'x' marks specific rhythmic motifs in the first system.

Ex. 20-6: String Quartet No. 4, second movement, bars 10 - 16

movement (a staccato quaver followed by a longer note), which characterises all of the principal material. Minor/major third motifs (derived from the triads with added degrees, which yield many such combinations, such as D $\flat$ -E-F in the first bar of the movement, and G-G $\sharp$ -B and G $\sharp$ -B-C in the third) become more prominent towards the end of the phrase (x in bars 13-16), informing the ‘triad motif’, whose role throughout the movement is largely disruptive. Occasionally material with strong whole-tone content interrupts. Although some references to first movement (first subject) harmony appear, the Minuet represents a clear move away from its instability, thus perhaps providing a link to the stability of the finale.

After a counterstatement of the first theme by the viola, the triad motif leads to a brief contrasting phrase ( $\square^5$ ), which acts as a transition to a second theme (constituting the B section of a ternary form) itself derived from the introduction (Ex. 20-7: the rhythm of the first bar derives directly from the first bar of the movement, also sharing the repeated note figure [quaver, rest, dotted crotchet] with the principal theme).<sup>12</sup> A further similarity with *Oration*, in the treatment of polychordal material, can be observed in the contrasting/transition material, in the juxtaposition of triads in the upper parts with bass notes that appear to be derived from the key a semitone below the given triad (for instance C major chords and bass notes derived from B major on the second and third beats of the first bar of  $\square$ ). The more biting tone of this transitional material is disruptive in effect, disturbing the poise of the first section to initiate further exploration in the B section. The bunching of semitones in the pitch content of the first bar of the



Ex. 20-7: String Quartet No. 4, second movement, bars 45 - 46

<sup>12</sup> Payne’s description of this movement as minuet and trio seems somewhat arbitrary given the similarity of content and mood of the main sections. Payne, *Frank Bridge – Radical and Conservative*, 93.



theme (E-F-F#-G-G#-A) and the ensuing whole-tone harmony contrasts with the static triadic/polychordal material of the A section, perhaps providing a subtle reference to the first movement. The single statement of *al* ( $\boxed{5}^{-1}$ ) that precedes the second theme, meanwhile, serves as a more typical reminder of the tensions of the previous movement. As noted, something similar can already be observed in the first movement's second subject; by refusing to sustain an illusory, escapist stability, Bridge can achieve a more convincing optimism in the finale.

A prolonged and varied version of introductory material ( $\boxed{8}$ ) grows seamlessly out of the second theme, linking to a return of the first. This alternates with introductory material to bring the movement to a close. The static appearance of the material, resulting from its uniformity and integration, prepares for the broad brushstrokes of the finale, which breaks with the subtlety of works such as the Third String Quartet, Second Piano Trio and Violin Sonata, allowing it to achieve a new, robust optimism.

Like the finale of the Second String Quartet, the third movement opens with a slow introduction based initially on second subject material from the first movement (first *c*, then the opening of the development, cf. first movement,  $\boxed{8}$  and  $\boxed{15}$ ). A compound-time second section begins to gather pace, introducing motivic and harmonic links to other first movement material, mainly from the transition and the developmental part of the second subject, suggesting a transitional role matched by the appearance of octatonic harmony in the last phrase. This is maintained in the first two bars of the *Allegro con brio*, at which point the bare fifths in the second violin and viola parts announce the robust and affirmative tone of the rest of the movement, and after a characteristic 'period of assembly and preparation' of 19 bars, the main theme enters in its primary form, in C major (Ex. 20-8).

There are a number of distinct similarities in character with some of Bridge's earlier finales, such as those of the String Sextet, Second String Quartet and the Suite for Strings, and thus with what I termed his 'rustic', pastoral style in connection with the Second Quartet. There is an element of playful scherzando in this manner, much of which originally derives from Grieg, and which can be observed in perhaps its purest form in the last of the *Idylls*. Features such as the prominent 'rustic' fifths, the addition to the tonic chord of 'pastoral' sixth and ninth degrees at the conclusion of the movement, the modality suggested by the alternation of C major and D major, and the suggestion of shifting modes in the characteristic 'major-to-minor' inflection all

Ex. 20-8: String Quartet No. 4, third movement, bars 49 - 52

emphasise this stylistic kinship. In the waltz-like inflections of the melodic material there is perhaps also a reference to the Viennese waltz, subtly imparting an additional poise and refinement, which aids a sense of lightness and forward-momentum. The waltz element also seems comparatively unrestrained after the delicate central minuet; the progression from violent chaos at the outset of the work, through static, formulaic stability, to joyful exuberance in the finale integrates several of the most important expressive characters of Bridge's music into a logical progression, spanning a wide aesthetic/stylistic range. The application of these stylistic types to the finale of the Fourth Quartet may be wholly unexpected after the expressionist seriousness of the previous two decades, but it is nevertheless the key to transcending the violence of the first movement fully. Perhaps this is the confrontation of 'healthy' and 'neurasthenic' elements in their most advanced form (associated implications of gender have become too complex to be useful at this point).<sup>13</sup> The intrusion of waltz tropes into the chamber music is unusual, being a recurring preoccupation of the orchestral music; in the late works there is however a continual engagement with this element, particularly in *Rebus* and the unfinished *Symphony*, and perhaps also in the third *Divertimento*.

The expressionist elements of the first movement are tortured and unstable; in previous works Bridge had worked hard to stabilise these aspects of his musical language. In the Fourth Quartet he transcends them through the vigour of the finale

<sup>13</sup> Might this music have been lurking at the back of Britten's mind when writing the *allegro vivo* sections of the first movement of his own First String Quartet? The placement of this material, alongside the serene treble passages, in the first movement, achieves an effect entirely different from anything found in Bridge's oeuvre, but there is a distinct similarity in characterisation, and perhaps also in what it represents, logically and emotionally.

(rondo) theme, which is manly without being pompous; there is a playful humour, perhaps even a hint of buffoonery, which is essential in securing an escape from the seriousness of the first movement. A number of elements aid this process, including the use of a simple rondo form (Fig. 20-2), and, ingeniously, the initial key centre of C major. The rondo theme makes use not only of the alternation of major and minor mode inflections, linking it immediately to the second subject of the first movement without needing to quote from it explicitly, but also of the characteristic timbre of the low open fifth, C-G, in the cello part, referring to the prominent Bridge chord observed towards the beginning and end of the first movement. In moving from C to D, Bridge recreates and affirms the assertion of transcendence attempted in the first movement. This is not primarily achieved through a sense of functional tonality (although the emphatic dominant preparation before the final section is certainly significant), but through the character of the material and the logic of its evolution throughout the Quartet. Thus where the first movement provides the basic conflict and the seeds (and declared intention) of resolution, the finale represents the full flowering of these elements.

A	B	A	B	A
Introduction, assembly of principal motifs and rondo theme in C.	First episode, relying heavily on semiquaver triplet motifs derived from <i>a2</i> and the 'triad motif' from the minuet.	Brief rondo theme, moving from D to C.	Second episode, quickly establishing D major.	References to previous movements; rondo theme in D + coda.
	13	18	22	25

Fig. 20-2: String Quartet No. 4, third movement, rondo form

The arrival at stability is remarkably (and perhaps necessarily) simple: after the initial statement of the rondo theme with its 'earthy' C major resonance, a second theme (the first 'B' episode, 13) disrupts the solidity of the rondo material. This is separated from the rondo theme by an octatonic link (12), and is dominated by a motif (Ex. 20-9) that has two important and obvious precursors, in interval content and presentation: *a2* and the 'triad motif' in the minuet (cf. Ex. 20-6). Like the latter, it is disruptive in nature, and the link with *a2* is made explicit when it is presented in alternation with *a1* at 17. Recalling the D $\flat$ -C progression towards the end of the first movement, a 'shared mediant' chord (D $\flat$  major and D minor, 16<sup>2</sup>) leads briefly to a suggestion of C (17<sup>2</sup>),

but this is not stable, and the second rondo theme section enters in D major (18), the approach to D again featuring a shared mediant chord, C major and D $\flat$  minor). This is also short-lived, reverting to C before leading to the second B section (22). In sharp contrast to the first, this soon embraces D major, as well as the rondo theme's major-to-minor inflections. It is eventually interrupted by a final reference to the first movement's first subject (25), divested of *a* harmony, but nevertheless serving as a last reminder of the chaos it represents. The harmony, referring to polychordal combinations, symmetrical scales and moving towards D major, suggests a neutralisation of *a*. D major now explicitly absorbs the first movement's second subject (Ex. 20-10), confirming the inversion of roles of first and second subject material suggested in the first movement.



Ex. 20-9: String Quartet No. 4, third movement, first violin, bar 85

Moderato [♩. = 60]

Ex. 20-10: String Quartet No. 4, third movement, bars 172 - 173

The rondo theme returns in D major (29) to round off the movement with a whimsical flourish, emphasising that this is a light-hearted victory – in a sense Bridge has regained the freedom to be light-hearted. This is not to suggest that the Fourth Quartet is necessarily superior to the works that precede it, which present alternative

explorations of similar problems. The explorations of the Fourth Quartet simply take place at a more advanced stage in Bridge's development, achieving a solution that would not have been possible without the earlier works.

\* \* \*

If the mood of the late chamber works may be related to Bridge's recovery from illness, the emotional impact of the Second World War becomes more relevant in his last works, *Rebus* and the unfinished Symphony for strings. Bridge was obviously less willing to engage musically with the realities of the Second World War than the 'changed world' of the previous conflict, exemplified by his comment regarding *Rebus*: 'There is every need not to underline or reflect too much upon the distressing emotions with which everyone is assailed.'<sup>14</sup> If the central march section seems to approach the conflict, it is contained, as a sort of nightmarish vision, between the main sections, which alternate lush and impish material. Where the previous war had been met with shock, an attitude of grim determination was felt to be more appropriate here. This should not necessarily be interpreted as escapism, but an attempt at a productive response to the situation. Peter de Vries, writing in 1943, noted that responses to the War in poetry were likely to be notably different to those produced by the previous conflict. Neither the approach of Rupert Brooke nor that of Siegfried Sassoon was now appropriate:

having entered upon war completely aware of its nature and motives, they are not likely to compose poetry out of any lacerated disillusionment. Anger over this war is as scarce as optimism, the one being useless, the other impossible.<sup>15</sup>

Where the reality of the First World War had been a traumatic shock, the Second (including its horrific effects on everyone directly or indirectly involved) was foreseeable:

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<sup>14</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 18 May 1940.

<sup>15</sup> Peter de Vries, 'Poetry and the War', *College English* 5/3 (December 1943), 114.

With the depression thirties there sprang up a new school of poets, led by W. H. Auden, who converted the poem into a clinical instrument for recording their diagnoses of the ills of a sick society. Wise in Freud, on the one hand, and Marx, on the other, they dissected both the subjective individual and society at large, simultaneously pursuing horizontal and vertical explorations that resulted in a curiously cross-grained verse evolving an increasingly private language even as it turned to more public concerns. They emphasized the political man in his relation to a society staggering to its doom under economic maladjustments and the threat of impending war ... the poets had been writing about this war for years before its actual outbreak.<sup>16</sup>

Thus while the First World War accelerated Bridge's stylistic expansion and acceptance of unstable and dissonant elements, the Second encouraged his reengagement with more traditional expressive and harmonic devices, their disciplined application perhaps suggesting a 'Classicist' aesthetic.

That said, Bridge found it difficult to compose, commenting 'How old Lud. van B. wrote anything whilst Napoleon was tickling up the Viennese is a mystery to me and will for ever remain so.'<sup>17</sup> His proximity (in Friston) to the conflict is vividly described in a letter to Coolidge:

Poor Eastbourne (five miles away from here) has had a gruesome time. We 'vibrate' with their agony. Only those who have experienced the whine and whizz of falling bombs can know what one feels like. A night or two ago we were convinced that [we] were 'for it'. Providentially they fell on a barn about a quarter of a mile away, in the valley. (Eight of them!) The noise was terrific. The cottage seemed to bend in and out. No damage. A few more cracks in the ceilings. The brutes are always going over us. Twice last week low down over our garden, not more than 25 to 30 ft. up. One dropped out of the cloud over the next field, flattened out in time to hop over the hedge and get away safely to the sea. Unless I had seen this (a huge bomber) I should have never believed it possible.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps the experience of near-fatal illness provided an additional perspective of ongoing significance. As noted, a number of continuing technical and aesthetic trends characterise the last period, and aspects of the *Divertimenti* and Fourth Quartet are also

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<sup>16</sup> de Vries, 'Poetry and the War', 114.

<sup>17</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 28 December 1939.

<sup>18</sup> Letter to Coolidge, 14 October 1940.

encountered in the subsequent works. Bridge's more accessible orchestral manner in *Rebus* and the incomplete state of the Symphony make it difficult to speculate how his style might have developed had he lived to compose more, but the return of explicitly tonal elements and the clarity of expression and presentation in the last chamber and orchestra works represent a new stage in his development, distinct from the expressionistic ambiguities of the 20s and early 30s. Perhaps there is a parallel here with roughly contemporary developments in the styles of composers such as Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Bliss and Walton. There is a synthesis of elements allowing for a greater expressive range, exemplified by the discrepancy between the opening and closing material of the Fourth Quartet and its integration into a logical progression, reflecting Bridge's personality more completely than any previous period, combining the wit and optimism of the early style with the complex language and technical mastery of his subsequent output. In the application of 'robust' quartal harmony, melodic semitone clashes, veiled tonal elements and complete transformation of waltz and pastoral references in the *Allegro moderato* there is a clear further development of stylistic elements, demonstrating that Bridge's language was still expanding. Perhaps the wide stylistic range of Britten's music (not least in the *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* of 1937) and the ever-expanding horizons of composers such as Stravinsky and Schoenberg provided a stimulus in this last period.

After Bridge's death in 1941 his music fell into relative neglect. The continued efforts of Britten, and an increased academic interest in Bridge and his music in the 1970s and 80s (notably by Anthony Payne, Peter Pirie, Paul Hindmarsh, Trevor Bray, Stephen Banfield and John Bishop), led to a gradual revival, with an increase in performances, recordings and efforts by publishers to make scores available. The chamber music has been central to this process, representing the most widely performed and recorded portion of the output. Recent scholarship has begun to provide useful approaches to Bridge's music and his historical and cultural context, leading to a more differentiated view than that permitted by traditional labels such as 'Britten's teacher', 'pacifist' or 'composer of salon music'. Similarly, the often vague ideas about the constitution of Bridge's mature musical language and influences upon it are beginning to be replaced with a more concrete and detailed understanding.

The issues raised in this study, of genre, modernism in art, culture and society, and how these relate to the form and matter of Bridge's music are intended to contribute to that understanding. It has been my aim in particular to explore how this 'matter' is

constituted and how it articulates the structural processes within the forms used. This has facilitated a comparison of works and their technical elements between stylistically diverse periods and separate portions of Bridge's output. An examination of the developing style and aesthetic is essential to an understanding of Bridge's music and its place in twentieth-century music, specifically its position as an early example of English musical modernism.



## Appendix – List of chamber works played by Bridge at the Royal College of Music

1900:

Bridge – String Quartet in D minor (14 November)

Dvorak – Terzetto for two violins and viola (5 December)

1901:

Dvorak – String Quintet (13 February)

Dvorak – String Quartet op. 96 (27 June)

[Bridge – String Quintet first performed 4 December, Bridge not playing]

1902:

Brahms – Piano Quartet op. 25 (6 February)

Dvorak – String Quartet op. 96 (10 July)

Mendelssohn – String Quartet op. 44/2

& Brahms – String Quintet op. 111 (10 October)

1903:

Beethoven – String Quartet op. 59/2

& Bridge – Piano Quartet (23 January)

Beethoven – String Quartet op. 127 (5 March)

Borodin – String Quartet No. 2

& Dvorak – Piano Quartet op. 87 (18 March)

Brahms – Piano Quartet op. 26 (5 June)

Franck – Piano Quintet (12 June)

Strauss – Piano Quartet op. 13 (16 July)

Schumann – String Quartet op. 41/1  
& Brahms String Quartet op. 67 (21 October)  
Haydn – String Quartet op. 64/4 (6 November)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 59/3 (15 December)

1904:

Mozart – String Quartet No. 15 in D minor, KV421  
& Brahms – Piano Quartet op. 25 (29 January)  
Brahms – String Quartet op. 51/2 (11 February)  
Schubert String Quartet op. 29, 'Rosamunde' (26 February)  
Schumann – String Quartet op. 41/2  
& Brahms – String Sextet op. 18 (11 March)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 95  
& Serenade for Flute, Violin and Viola op. 25 (4 June)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 74 (23 Jun)  
Haydn – String Quartet op. 74/3 (7 July)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 59/1  
& Schumann – Piano Quartet (15 July)  
Debussy – String Quartet (19 October)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 18/5 (10 November)  
Dvorak – String Quartet op. 96 (17 November)  
Bridge – *Novelletten* (24 November)

1905:

Beethoven – String Quartet op. 18/3  
& Sinding – Piano Quintet in E minor (27 January)  
Schubert – String Quintet (9 February)  
Brahms – String Quintet op. 111 (23 February)  
Friskin – Piano Quartet in G minor  
& Dvorak – Piano Quintet op. 81 (16 March)  
Haydn – String Quartet op. 76/2  
& Svendsen – String Octet op. 3 (24 May)

Dvorak – String Quartet op. 51 (15 June)  
Mozart – ‘String Quartet in E flat’  
    & Schumann – String Quartet op. 41/3 (6 July)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 130 (20 July)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 132  
    & Goetz – Piano Quintet op. 16 (19 October)  
Franck – Piano Quintet  
    & Schubert – String Quartet in D minor, ‘Death and the Maiden’ (10 November)  
Dvorak – Piano Quartet (23 November)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 135  
    & Dvorak – String Sextet op. 48 (1 December)

1906:

Brahms – String Quartet op. 51/2 (24 January)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 127  
    & Dvorak – Piano Quintet (7 February)  
Mendelssohn – String Quartet op. 44/2 (2 March)  
Grieg – String Quartet op. 27 (16 March)  
Tchaikovsky – String Quartet op. 30 (25 May)  
Mozart – ‘String Quartet in C’  
    & Schubert – Piano Quintet (7 June)  
Schumann – String Quartet op. 41/2 (22 June)  
Smetana – String Quartet in E minor (12 July)  
Beethoven – String Quartet op. 59/3 (18 October)  
Mozart – String Quartet in D, KV575 (2 November)  
Mozart – String Quartet in E flat, KV428 (9 November)

1907:

Brahms – String Quartet op. 67 (31 January)  
Schumann – Piano Quintet  
    & Mozart – String Quartet in B flat, KV458 (13 February)

Mozart – String Quartet in C, KV465

& Brahms – Piano Quartet op. 26 (15 March)

Schubert – String Quartet in D minor, 'Death and the Maiden' (13 June)

Haydn – String Quartet op. 64/4 (4 July)

Haydn – String Quartet op. 64/5

& Brahms – Piano Quintet op. 34 (17 July)

Franck – Piano Quintet (31 October)

Beethoven – String Quartet op. 59/2 (14 November)

1908:

Dvorak – String Quartet op. 51 (6 February)

Sekles – Serenade for Strings & Wind in E flat, op. 14 (13 March)

Borodin – String Quartet No. 2 (29 May)

Faure – Piano Quartet No 2 (11 June)

Schumann – String Quartet op. 41/3 (16 July)

Brahms – String Quartet op. 51/1 (22 October)

Franck – String Quartet in D major (26 November)

Beethoven – Serenade Trio op. 8

& Brahms – Piano Quartet op. 25 (15 December)

1909:

Schumann – String Quartet op. 41/1 (4 February)

Schubert String Quartet in D minor, 'Death and the Maiden' (11 March)

Beethoven – String Quartet op. 59/1

& Brahms – Piano Quintet op. 34 (18 March)

Brahms – String Quartet op. 67 (25 May)

Beethoven – Septet op. 20 (10 June)

Beethoven – String Quintet in C, op. 29 (1 July)

Beethoven – String Quartet op. 18/4 (24 November)

Brahms – String Sextet op. 36 (9 December)

Dunhill – Piano Quartet op. 16 (16 December)

1910:

Beethoven – String Quartet op. 127  
& Schubert – String Quintet (3 February)

Spohr – Octet for Strings and Wind in E, op. 32  
& Brahms – String Quartet op. 67 (3 March)

Schubert – String Quartet op. 161 (16 June)

Smetana – String Quartet in E minor (14 July)

1912:

Haydn – String Quartet op. 54/2 (1 March)

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