

GERALD FINZI AND JOHN IRELAND:
A STYLISTIC COMPARISON OF COMPOSITIONAL APPROACHES
IN THE CONTEXT OF TEN SELECTED POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY

A Written Document
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
in
The School of Music

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December, 2005

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to provide a stylistic analysis that contrasts five Thomas Hardy settings by Gerald Finzi with five settings by John Ireland. In order to investigate the apparent intuitiveness with which both Ireland and Finzi approached Thomas Hardy's poetry, biographical information is provided to reveal similarities in the backgrounds of each composer. Highlighted are the compositional techniques and text setting ideologies each composer utilized when facing the challenges and eccentricities of Hardy's poetry. A brief discussion on the philosophical foundations of Thomas Hardy's poetry is also included. The repertoire discussed within are the settings *Summer Schemes*, *The Phantom*, *Rollicum-Rorum*, *The Clock of the Years*, and *Channel Firing* by Gerald Finzi as well as *Summer Schemes*, *The tragedy of that moment*, *Beckon to me to come*, *Dear, think not that they will forget you* and *Weathers* by John Ireland.

INTRODUCTION

In the preface to his book *Parry to Finzi- Twenty English Song-Composers*, Trevor Hold proposes that there exist two Golden Ages of song in England. He defines the first Age as having its beginnings at the turn of the 17th century, naming composers such as Dowland, Campion, Daniel, and Rosseter amongst its ranks. The second, according to Hold, occurred at the end of Queen Victoria's reign (c. 1901), lasted into the later stages of King George V's reign (c. 1910-1936), and encompassed the careers of Parry, Stanford, Somervell, and Warlock. Mr. Hold sites the strong influences of Parry and Stanford as the *tour de force* responsible for linking together the composers of this second era. Parry's compositional style, for example, provided inspiration for the well-known song composer Gerald Finzi. Stanford, on the other hand, taught many of the era's song composers, not the least of which was the meticulous John Ireland.

Coined by some as the Era of English Romantic Song, the composers of this period chose from a colorful palate of poets. The philosophical slant of one poet in particular, Thomas Hardy, was well supported by a number of the era's compositional geniuses. In the book *Music in Britain: The Twentieth Century*, Stephen Banfield notes that Ireland and Finzi "achieved the best rapport" with Hardy's particular brand of serious verse.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a stylistic analysis that contrasts five Thomas Hardy settings by Gerald Finzi with five settings by John Ireland. In order to investigate the apparent intuitiveness with which both Ireland and Finzi approached Thomas Hardy's poetry, biographical information will be provided to reveal similarities in the backgrounds of each composer. Highlighted are the compositional techniques and text setting ideologies each composer utilized when facing the challenges and eccentricities of Hardy's poetry. A

brief discussion on the philosophical foundations of Thomas Hardy's poetry is also provided herein.

CHAPTER 1
THE POETRY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THOMAS HARDY:
A BRIEF INSIGHT

Thomas Hardy was born in Upper Brockhampton near Dorchester in Dorset, England. Hardy's father, Thomas Hardy senior, was a stonemason. His mother, Jamina, was a well-read woman whose concern for her children compelled her to equip them with the "linguistic, educational, and social skills to rise out of their background and into the middle class."¹

Hardy is generally regarded as one of the greatest names in the canon of British literature. He is a prolific poet having composed 1,093 poems.² To many of his critics, however, Hardy was said to be primarily a novelist. Literary critics, especially those in Hardy's lifetime, were not easily swayed by the author's claim to be first and foremost a poet and not primarily a writer of prose.³ It was not until the 1950s that a re-evaluation of Hardy's poetry was sparked by the highly acclaimed poet/critic Phillip Larkin.⁴

It is interesting to note the vigor with which Hardy defended his poetry. Hardy had composed poetry in the beginning of his career, but only to modest success. It was his return to poetry after writing several successful novels that marked a creative renaissance in the seasoned veteran's literary career. It was at this point in the author's career that his experience and maturity was allowed to manifest itself in the genre of poetry. In 1902, Hardy justified his return to poetry proclaiming: "that form of expression seems to fit my thoughts

¹ Michael Millgate, *Thomas Hardy. A Biography Revisited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 30-31.

² Dennis Taylor. *Hardy's Metres and Victorian Prosody*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 2.

³ *Thomas Hardy: Selected Poems*, ed. Walford Davis (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1982), 7.

⁴ Taylor, 139.

better as I grow older, as it did when I was young also.”⁵ In 1904, he elaborated on this point saying that he “found the condensed expression that it (poetry) affords so much more consonant to my natural way of thinking and feeling.”⁶ In 1912, Hardy suggested to a friend that he ought to read his poems rather than his novels saying: “the novels seem immature to me.”⁷ Furthermore, in 1915, he instructed professor and scholar Harold Child to: “treat my verse...as my essential writings and my prose as accidental.”⁸ By 1923, Hardy’s confidence in his poetry prompted his proclamation that in regards to his total output, the novels had been “superseded in the view of critics by the more important half of my work, the verse, published during the last 25 years.”⁹ In his book, *Hardy’s Metres and Victorian Prosody*, Dennis Taylor explains that by the time he died in 1928, Thomas Hardy had committed himself to the genre of poetry on a full-time basis for thirty-six years.¹⁰

Taking into account his earliest poems, we can say that Hardy’s poetic career spanned roughly between 1860-1928. Historically speaking, this career includes the mid- and late Victorian period (1837-1901), the Edwardian period (1901-1910), the Georgian period (1911-1912), the post war period, and the twenties. Represented in this time-span are both the climax and end of a five hundred year tradition of accentual-syllabic verse in English literature.¹¹

Taylor states that Hardy’s preoccupation with metrical form was “a fascination born and nurtured within the context of Victorian metrical theory and practice.”¹² Given the fact that many Victorian poets were metrical theorists, it is logical to surmise that theory directly

⁵*The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy*, ed. Richard Little Purdy and Michael Milgate (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 3:43.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 133.

⁷ *Thomas Hardy’s Personal Writings*, ed. Harold Orel (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1966), 48.

⁸ Hardy, *Collected Letters*, 4:220.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 6:182.

¹⁰ Taylor, 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹² *Ibid.*

inspired the poetry of the Victorian period. In fact, Taylor argues that the Victorian period “was the first period to discover a theory of metre adequate to the genius of its poets.”¹³

Taylor also reminds us that Hardy’s first career, spanning from 1856-72, was that of a Gothic revival architect. Hardy’s award-winning year, 1863, marked his triumph as an architect, and a high Victorian Gothic. Taylor notes that the “imagery, structure atmosphere, and aesthetic issues of Gothic architecture nurtured Hardy’s...poems and...his theory of metre.”¹⁴

In the late 1920s, Hardy made a Gothic-metre analogy. Taylor speculates that this analogy was most likely influenced by the 1919 Ramsay Traquair article which Hardy read entitled “Free Verse and the Parthenon.”¹⁵ The basis of Traquair’s article, and furthermore the tenets of Hardy’s Gothic-metre analogy, is a theory based on the premise that variety may be achieved within the basic frameworks of “old forms.”¹⁶ Traquair writes: “Just as correct metre will not make a fine poem, so regular rhythm will not make a fine building.”¹⁷ Traquair’s also provides an answer to the conservative skeptic that might counter his argument. He states: “Is not rhythm, regular rhythm, the very essence of poetry?”¹⁸ The balance between irregularity and structure Traquair labels the “paradox of order and freedom.”¹⁹ Traquair’s commentary also notes that in classical architecture “no part can be taken away”²⁰ and then in Gothic architecture “we may add a choir, aisles, chapels, cloister, chantries in what profusion we wish.”²¹ Taylor further clarifies Traquair’s

¹³ Taylor, 3.

¹⁴ Taylor, 47.

¹⁵ Ramsey Traquair, “Free Verse and the Parthenon,” *Canadian Bookman* (April 1919): 22-6. Quoted in Taylor, *Hardy’s Metres and Victorian Prosody*, 47.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

analogy noting: “these two architectures are in turn related to strict and loose forms of rhythm and poetry.”²²

Thomas Hardy wrote in more metrical forms than any other well-known English poet. Hardy’s commitment to stanzaic forms endured throughout his career. Hardy’s *Complete Poetical Works*, for example, contains very little blank verse (any verse comprised of unrhymed lines all in the same meter) and absolutely no instances of free verse. Hardy’s concept of metrical form matured as he developed an increasingly intense fascination with the works of metrical theorists.²³ Regarding the integral nature of this theorist-poet relationship, Taylor notes that Hardy:

...(Hardy)...participated in a common exploration...
(in) a community of metrical discovery which inspired
theory and practice.²⁴

Hardy agreed full-heartily with theorists like Basil De Selincourt whose 1911 article stressed the need for English poets of the day to be more open minded in regard to the structure of their verse. Hardy copied the following from a 1911 De Selincourt article:

...so long as the structure of a verse shows either in
itself or in its context the number of accents which
it ought to have and the places where they ought to
fall, so long as the mind hears the implied accents
in their places, the number and position of the accents
which naturally occur is of no consequence.²⁵

Theorists like DeSelincourt respected traditional forms while also supporting a new, progressive style of prosody.

Another theorist from whose works Hardy took vigorous notes was Coventry Patmore. Patmore theorized that there exists a basic human need for form. Patmore noted

²² Taylor, 47.

²³ Taylor, 4.

²⁴ Taylor, 3.

²⁵ Basil De Selincourt, quoted in Taylor, *Hardy’s Metres and Victorian Prosody*, 23.

that even an “ictus” or “beat” can both satisfy this need by giving the brain a unit by which it can organize material. Furthermore, he proclaimed that form has little to do with the external (that which is observable on the written page) and much more to do with the internal (that having its place in the mind on a conscious or unconscious level). Patmore explains in one of his *Essays*:

... ‘ictus’ or ‘beat’, actual or mental, which, like a post in a chain railing, shall mark the end of one space, and the common cement of another... Yet, all important as this time-beater is, I think it demonstrable that, for the most part, it has has no material and external existence at all, but has its place in the mind, which craves measure in everything.²⁶

Another theorist that piqued the interest of Hardy was Robert Bridges. Bridges, similar to Patmore, writes about form as it relates to expectation. The theorist comments that the reader has an innate expectation not only for form, but also for rhythm. Bridges notes that “old metrical verse” carried a greater *expectancy* of rhythm, whereas new ideals in prosody work to vary the expected rhythm. The poet’s art, according to Bridges, was to “vary the expected rhythm as much as he could without disagreeably balking the expectation.”²⁷

Because of its inherent intricacies, it is difficult to impose rules and restrictions on metre in the English language. Taylor notes:

The centuries old puzzle of English rhythm is that once a metrical theorist finds a way to formulate the metrical rule of a given poem, a reader will soon

²⁶ Coventry Patmore, *Essay on English Metrical Law*, ed. Sister Mary Roth (Washington, DC, 1961), 15. quoted in Taylor, *Hardy’s Metres and Victorian Prosody*, 22.

²⁷ Robert Bridges, quoted in Taylor, *Hardy’s Metres and Victorian Prosody*, 29.

find a line which violates the formulation.²⁸

Hardy uses experimental methods of writing prosody and encases these progressive rhythmic intricacies within traditional Romantic and Victorian forms. Thus, Hardy's work can be seen as both traditional and transitional. The literary culture in which the author lived, a culture largely defined by the writings of metrical theorists, allowed Hardy the opportunity to exist as a catalyst for progress.

Hardy's revolutionary views on writing as they relate to tragedy are not at all surprising. Katherine Kearney Maynard in her book *Thomas Hardy's Tragic Poetry* writes:

His poems are remarkable efforts to crystalize the tragic feeling that emerges intermittently in Romantic and Victorian lyric poetry.²⁹

Hardy's brand of tragedy is one steeped in the sorrows of the human oppression. This oppression, from Hardy's viewpoint, is brought on by the inevitable discouragement and adversity of everyday life. For this reason, many of Hardy's critics have labeled his writing as pessimistic in nature.

It is impossible to speak of Hardy without a brief insight into his philosophy. Hardy voices his viewpoint regarding the ancient institutions of religion and drama in the *apology* to *Late Lyrics and Earlier* calling all religions "questionings in the exploration of reality."³⁰ Maynard points out that the mere fact that Hardy found comparisons "between works as different as Athenian drama and Christian scripture"³¹ ought to indicate a certain degree of sensibility that exists in Hardy's creative thought processes. This sensibility, she adds, is the core of his melancholy nature. Although many of Romantic and Victorian poets shared this

²⁸Taylor, 7.

²⁹ Katherine Kearney Maynard, *Thomas Hardy's Tragic Poetry: the Lyrics and the The Dynasts*. (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991), 7.

³⁰ Thomas Hardy, Introduction to *Late Lyrics and Earlier*. James Gibson, ed., *The Complete Poems of Thomas Hardy* (London: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1978), 556-57.

³¹ Maynard, 7.

melancholy nature in their poetry, Maynard proclaims, Hardy's "sharp sense of irony"³² distinguishes him from other nineteenth-century poets.³³

In regards to the dramatic content of his poetry, Hardy's poems can oftentimes be seen as glimpses or snapshots of a situation or a happening. Mardsen notes that these are in fact, Hardy's attempts "to communicate a sense of immediate present."³⁴ In fact, Mardsen equates Hardy's approach as an effort to "arrest the flux of Time and Change."³⁵ The effect is a freezing the present rather than making it actual, a technique Mardsen calls "continuous present."³⁶

The function of the speaker in many of Hardy's tragic poems is to express how he or she is experiencing a particular moment. At times, these "moments" may seem frivolous. However, upon a second or third reading it may become evident to the reader that Hardy's intention is to turn these seemingly trivial "moments" into instances of tragedy. What is interesting is that in his poetry, Hardy does not prepare his audience before presenting his tragedy. In the absence of biographical material to give insight into the speaker's experiences and memories, interpretation of his poetry is often difficult. Moreover, it is impossible for the reader to know the depth of a poem.

Why did Hardy write poems that resist interpretation? Why did he write tragic poetry about seemingly mundane circumstances of everyday life? Samuel Hynes summarized Hardy's unique philosophy as it pertained to his tragic poetry remarking that Hardy "saw tragedy as a constituent of ordinary existence and not as a quality of noble and

³² Maynard, xii.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Kenneth Mardsen, *The Poems of Thomas Hardy: A Critical Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 92.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

dramatic lives.”³⁷ Hynes further postulates that Hardy’s poetry often seems to be “written almost from habit”³⁸ or from “some private need to record reality.”³⁹ Indeed, it is almost as if Hardy never intended to publish these works at all because they are written without an audience in mind. Hynes proclaims that this “is not a matter of allusiveness, or Modernist obscurity.”⁴⁰ Instead, Hardy felt since he was his own audience and he had an understanding of the events leading to the composition of a particular poem, there existed justification enough for the poem’s composition.⁴¹

As one reads the poetry of Hardy, the poet’s fascination with time will be quite evident. Hardy’s fixation with the element of time is a fixation linked intimately to his system of beliefs. Hardy scholar Kenneth Mardsen notes that time, memory, and death are all interwoven in Hardy’s worldview. For Hardy, an atheist, the here-and-now is the only reality that exists. The lack of Providence in Hardy’s worldview allows time to dictate truth instead of God. Mardsen speculates:

When the idea of God or Guiding Providence
disappears or becomes incredible, Time and Truth
come to have a very close association.⁴²

Truth, to Hardy, is revealed only through what happens over the course of time. Thus, when time meets one’s expectations, truth takes on a wonderful connotation, but when time does not meet one’s expectations, the stage is set for tragedy. Both theists and atheists alike might share the sentiment that “without hope in God, tragedy is inevitable.” Thus, the theist is placing his hope in something while the atheist can find nothing in which to place his hope. This idea of divine indifference possessed by the atheist is the critical

³⁷ Samuel Hynes, *Introduction*. In *Thomas Hardy: Selected Poetry*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) xx.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

component to the tragic element of Hardy's poetry. Hardy's philosophy proclaims that we will all inevitably fall victim to natural circumstance. Katherine Maynard remarks:

Many of Hardy's lyrics demonstrate that humanity as victim of divine indifference is a suitable theme for tragedy.⁴³

Linda Shires, in her article entitled *Saying that you are not as you were: Hardy's Poems of 1912-1913* explains: "Thomas Hardy understood the source of his art to be a relationship between emotion and time."⁴⁴ Hardy, in his letters, explained this far-reaching connection between memory and drama saying:

I have a faculty...for burying my emotion in my heart or brain for forty years, and exhuming it at the end of that time as fresh as when interred.⁴⁵

Hardy relied on his memory to supply him with material for a big portion of his poems. "Reminiscence,"⁴⁶ Kenneth Mardsen exclaims, "is one of his characteristic modes." Mardsen continues commenting on the way in which Hardy's poems, one can sense, are products of long periods of pre-meditation and amalgamations of his experiences.

One feels that with him thought has long preceded words and has formed itself almost without them, that there has been brooding in almost inarticulate meditation upon Experience and experiences, and only later have the metrical moulds been formed to receive the results⁴⁷

Hardy's atheistic worldview manifests itself in his work as an author and in the statements he issued to the general public. In one such statement, Hardy proclaimed: "I

⁴³ Maynard, 34.

⁴⁴ Linda Shires. "Saying that you are not as you were: Hardy's Poems of 1912-1913," *Thomas Hardy and Contemporary Literary Studies*. (New York: Palgrave Mac Millan. 2004) , 138.

⁴⁵Thomas Hardy, quoted in "Saying that you are not as you were: Hardy's Poems of 1912-1913", *Thomas Hardy and Contemporary Literary Studies*. Shires, 138.

⁴⁶ Mardsen, 93.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

have been looking for God 50 years, and I think that if he existed I should have discovered him.”⁴⁸ Music historian Stephen Banfield, in his book entitled *Sensibility and English Song* writes that “Hardy’s rejection of Christianity was brittle, and often irritably defiant.”⁴⁹ Since Hardy’s atheistic worldview afforded him no supreme deity or eternal perspective on his future, Hardy came to the realization that he was subservient to both time and nature.

Thus, Hardy’s poetry is distinguishable from that of his peers because of its fatalistic nature. Also signature of Hardy’s poetry is an extreme creativity of prosody which he sets within antique forms. These two distinct characteristics combine to make a rather unusual body of poetry. The opinion echoed in the speculations of many music scholars is that Hardy’s poetry is unattractive because of its bleak outlook and because of the difficulties inherent in its prosody.

⁴⁸ Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility and English Song*. Vol.2, *Critical Studies of the Early 20th Century*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 275.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2 GERALD FINZI AND JOHN IRELAND: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

The Hardy settings by Gerald Finzi and John Ireland discussed in this paper were composed well into the mature stages of each composer's career. An investigation into the personalities, viewpoints, and beliefs of Finzi and Ireland reveals the philosophical ideals of the composers to be quite similar. Biographical sketches of the composers unveil events in each of their lives that provided the foundations for their fatalistic philosophic ideals. With this type of information, one is better able to understand the willingness of each composer to approach Hardy's most eccentric poetry with a spirit of boldness. In order to explore the intuitiveness with which Ireland and Finzi seemed to approach Thomas Hardy's fatalistic poetry, biographical information will be provided in this chapter uncovering the similarities in the backgrounds of each composer.

The Childhood of Gerald Finzi

Until September 15, 2005, the date marking the publication of Diana McVeagh's study entitled *Gerald Finzi: His Life and Music*, the only published biography on Gerald Finzi was Stephen Banfield's book published in 1997 entitled *Gerald Finzi: An English Composer*. In the past, biographers steered clear of Finzi as a subject because of the composer's relatively small output and lack of influence on the history of British music. Banfield comments on his pioneering pursuit saying:

(what) makes the task of biography stranger in Finzi's case than any other (is that) although his output and influence is that of a minor composer, something about his profile, the way he went about his job, the breadth of his thought, the depths of his personality and his impact on

others, in short, his individuality, always suggested something greater.⁵⁰

Much of the “individuality” to which Banfield speaks was molded within the composer’s youth. Indeed, a glimpse into Finzi’s upbringing and maturation provides much insight into the man and his music. It is through his life experiences that Finzi developed his own philosophical outlook. This outlook resembles, on many accounts, the philosophy of his favorite poet, Thomas Hardy. In the liner notes to the recording *Earth And Air And Rain: Songs By Gerald Finzi To Words By Thomas Hardy*, Diana McVeagh proclaims that both Finzi and Hardy believed in “the accident of chance in a man’s life and the power of memory to crystallize the past.”⁵¹ The first half of this chapter will include a biographical sketch of Finzi concentrating largely on the events of his younger years, with a special focus on his interest in the poetry of Thomas Hardy.

Gerald Finzi was born in London on July 14, 1901. Finzi’s background, or more specifically the background of his family, is one of affluence and intellect yoked heavily in cultural influences. Finzi was the youngest of five children born to Jack and Lizzie Finzi. Interestingly enough, the composer’s family background does little to support the notion of his Englishness. The Italian generation of Finzis is historically recorded as far back as the fourteenth century beginning with one Musetino del fu Museto de Finzi di Ancona “who was concerned in establishing the first Jewish money-lending office in Padua in 1369.”⁵² The generations of Finzis that lived in the following centuries enjoyed influential positions as rabbis, astronomers, bankers, physicians, lawyers, and surgeons. By the eighteenth century,

⁵⁰Stephen Banfield, *Gerald Finzi: An English Composer*. (London: Faber & Faber, 1997), 180.

⁵¹ Diana McVeagh, Liner Notes from *Earth And Air And Rain: Songs By Gerald Finzi To Words By Thomas Hardy*, Martyn Hill (tenor), Stephen Varcoe (baritone), Clifford Benson (piano), Hyperion #CDA66161-2, 1989, CD.

⁵² Banfield, 4.

the Finzi family enjoyed a presence in England.⁵³ Finzi's father, Jon Abraham (Jack) Finzi (1860-1909), although a non-practicing Jew, held firm to his cultural background.⁵⁴ Within his father's generation there remained a strong semblance of power regarding "his Jewish intellectual and social ties."⁵⁵ In his book *The Musicians: heirs and rebels of the musical renaissance: Edward Elgar to Benjamin Britten*, Michael Trend notes that because of his father's "success as a shipbroker" Finzi "would never have to rely on his music to make a living."⁵⁶

Isolation was a feeling experienced by the composer from birth. Joy Finzi, Gerald's wife, comments that Gerald was "an unwanted addition to a bursting upper-floor nursery and not welcomed by his sister and brothers."⁵⁷ Although Gerald grew to love his father dearly, he "always felt a stranger amongst siblings."⁵⁸ Joy quotes her husband, saying he:

likened this feeling to a group of telegraph wires,
each being able to communicate forward and
backward to eternity, but never to the closely
adjoining lines on either side.⁵⁹

Intertwining Finzi's life story with the sentiment of Hardy's poetry is a common theme. In his article: *Textual-Musical Relationships in Selected Songs of Gerald Finzi*, Burton B. Parker describes this theme as an inescapable dissatisfaction with one's environment. Parker notes:

We will see in Hardy's texts, his dissatisfaction
with his environment, however, he offers no
saving grace. In his poems there is no escape
from one's environment.⁶⁰

⁵³ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁵⁶ Michael Trend, *The Musicians: heirs and rebels of the musical renaissance: Edward Elgar to Benjamin Britten*. (London: Butler & Tanner Ltd., 1985), 214.

⁵⁷ Banfield, 10.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Burton B. Parker, "Textual-Musical Relationships in Selected Songs of Gerald Finzi," *The NATS Bulletin* (May/June 1973): 11.

Adding to young Finzi's sense of isolation were the untimely deaths of virtually all of his male influences. His father died of cancer on July 1, 1909 before the composer's eighth birthday. His eldest brother, Felix (1893-1913), a highly intelligent aircraft designer committed suicide in India at the age of twenty. Douglas, born in 1897, died of pneumonia at the age of five. Edgar, born in 1898, showed potential as a teenage cartoonist but "died in action with the Fleet Air Arm in the Aegean, shot down on September 5, 1918."⁶¹ By the end of the First World War, the composer's sister, Katie, was Gerald's only remaining sibling. Katie, the first of the five children, did not much care for her youngest brother Gerald.⁶²

The Development of Finzi's Philosophy and Compositional Style

Given his childhood experiences with death, it should come to no great surprise that Finzi adopted a fatalistic outlook on life. Michael Trend remarks "many people have noted that Finzi seemed aware that his own life too would be cut short."⁶³ Burton Parker concurs, noting that "even before his early bout with tuberculosis in 1927 his fatalistic personality had emerged."⁶⁴ Diana McVeagh states that between Finzi and Hardy "three shared subjects stand out."⁶⁵ She lists these three subjects as being: "the futility of war, the pressure of passing time, and the world's natural beauty and indifference to man."⁶⁶ It is interesting to note that each of McVeagh's "shared subjects"⁶⁷ align with an event in Finzi's life. The "futility of war,"⁶⁸ for example, resulted in the death of one of the composer's brothers.

⁶¹ Banfield, 11.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Trend, 214.

⁶⁴ Parker, 11.

⁶⁵ Diana McVeagh, Liner Notes from *Earth And Air And Rain: Songs By Gerald Finzi To Words By Thomas Hardy*, Hyperion #CDA66161-2, 1989, CD.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

The “pressure of time”⁶⁹ may have been the reason behind the suicide of another of his brothers. Similarly, the situation of Finzi’s father’s untimely death may be attributed to “nature’s indifference to man.”⁷⁰

In her book *Song: A Guide to Style & Literature*, Carol Kimball comments: “Finzi loved poetry and had an extensive library.”⁷¹ She also calls attention to the fact that Finzi “used texts of uniformly high quality.”⁷² Kimball also notes that Finzi set over fifty of the poet’s texts because Hardy’s “themes appealed to the pessimistic side of Finzi’s personality and allowed him to express his despondency in musical terms.”⁷³

Not much is known about Finzi’s childhood “beyond his perception of it as isolated and unhappy.”⁷⁴ Banfield speculates that it was probably in the time period following his father’s death that Finzi was sent to boarding school at Kingswood in Camberley, Surrey. This was not a good experience for the young Finzi who “faked fainting fits in the bath”⁷⁵ so that he might be taken out of the school. Also adding to the difficulties of Finzi’s childhood was the fact that he contracted measles in 1913 while at Kingswood.⁷⁶

By 1915, Mrs. Finzi moved to Harrogate, a move that may have been prompted by the Zeppelin raids on London beginning in April of that year. The director of the Municipal Orchestra in Harrogate, Julian Clifford, recommended that Finzi study composition with Ernest Farrar, a student of the esteemed composer Charles Stanford. Farrar, a young composer himself, was intimately connected with some of the best musicians of his generation, a generation that Banfield notes “formed the backbone of the turn-of-the

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Style & Literature* (Seattle: Pst...Inc., 1996), 333.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Banfield, 12.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

century English musical renaissance.”⁷⁷ Amongst Farrar’s friends were Frank Bridge, Clive Carey, and perhaps most importantly, Ralph Vaughn Williams. The relationship between Finzi and Farrar was one of mutual admiration. Farrar recognized Finzi’s talent and Finzi idolized his new teacher.⁷⁸

After a period of months, Farrar was called to duty and joined his regiment at Caterham. While on leave, Farrar took Finzi to meet Stanford at the Royal Conservatory of Music. Shortly following this endeavor, Stanford’s advice was that Finzi should not pursue a career in music. Shortly after this incident, Farrar wrote Finzi informing his once beloved protege that he did not have the time to continue teaching him. This letter provoked Mrs. Finzi and her son to confront Farrar face to face. At this point in time Farrar recommended that Finzi study with the only other teacher easily accessible from Harrogate, namely, Edward C. Bairstow. In her letters, Gerald Finzi’s wife, Joy, notes that “poor G(erald) was horrified as he had heard such tales of Bairstow’s strictness and at first he did not go.”⁷⁹ Finzi did, indeed, shy away from study with Bairstow and initially began to study with a far less superior composer, Frederick Helmsley.⁸⁰

Finzi soon realized his error and mustered up the courage to study with Bairstow. Although Finzi did not much like Bairstow, the teacher saw much potential in the young composition student. Furthermore, during the time that Finzi studied with him and thereafter, Bairstow went out of his way to play Finzi’s compositions. After three months of lessons Bairstow wrote to Mrs. Finzi:

I think your son and I are beginning to
understand one another better now. He is doing

⁷⁷ Ibid., 14.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 14.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 18.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 17-19.

much better work, and I am very interested in him.⁸¹

A few years later in 1925, Finzi took a course on counterpoint with R.O. Morris at which time Bairstow wrote Finzi saying:

I am glad you are tumbling to it at last that a little hard grind at CP (counterpoint) won't do you any harm.⁸²

At the bottom of this letter Finzi's personal addition to the document reads:

Yes, dear old ECB, but the counterpoint is nothing to do with the rubbish you tried to teach me for a year. I showed extraordinary common sense in jibbling against it.⁸³

In a subsequent letter to Mrs Finzi, Bairstow's accolades continued:

I would do what I could for your boy if I never received a cent for it...one can help the real thing when there us a chance to do so.⁸⁴

These private notes give a tinge of the pessimism with which Finzi, unbeknownst to many, led his life. Howard Ferguson, a close friend of the composer with whom he had much written concordance, writes: "few people will know that beneath his buoyant exterior lay a deep and fundamental pessimism...it seemed to colour everything he did and gave a peculiar intensity to everything he experienced."⁸⁵

One might imagine that Finzi longed for a reunion with his former mentor, Farrar, who left him to fend for himself in the fierce and ugly jaws of the dreaded Edward C. Bairstow. However, as fate had it, this would not be possible. A month before the confirmed death of Finzi's brother Edgar, Ernest Farrar died after only two days on the

⁸¹ Ibid., 18.

⁸² Ibid., 18-19.

⁸³ Ibid., 19.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 19.

⁸⁵ Howard Ferguson, *Letters of Gerald Finzi and Howard Ferguson*, ed. Michael Hurd (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewster, 2002), 134-135.

front lines. This event marked the end of a cherished relationship and the loss of one of the only positive male role models in the young composer's life.⁸⁶

Equipped with a glimpse into the composer's childhood, let us now turn to Gerald Finzi, the mature composer. Otto Karolyi, in his book entitled *Modern British Music: The Second British Musical Renaissance-From Elgar To P. Maxwell Davies*, further clarifies the means by which Finzi's has remained a figure in British music. Karolyi highlights the chief works by which the composer earned his way into the ranks of British music history: He states:

Finzi's claim for a place in the history of British music largely rest on *Dies natalis*, op 8 (1926-39) and his fine settings of several of Hardy's poems.⁸⁷

Dies natalis is a cantata for solo tenor or soprano and string ensemble. The cantata's five movements, based on the prose and poetry of a seventeenth century clergyman Traherne, describe the poet's childhood. In *Sensibility and English Song*, Stephen Banfield makes a point that the driving force compelling Finzi to express Trahern's sentiment of "childhood ecstasy"⁸⁸ was his need to express "what had been denied him in his youth."⁸⁹ The death of his father when he was eight and loss of his three brothers during his youth, left Finzi with "something of a fixation on his childhood."⁹⁰

In regard to his settings of Hardy's poems including: *A Young Man's Exhortation*, op. 14 (1933), *Earth and Air and Rain* (1936), *Before and After Summer* op. 16 (1949), *I Said to Love* (1958), and *Till Earth Outwears* (1958), Karolyi notes that Finzi empathized much with Hardy's outlook on life. He writes:

⁸⁶ Ibid., 20.

⁸⁷ Otto Karolyi, *Modern British Music: the second British musical renaissance- from Elgar to P. Maxwell Davies*. (London: Associated University Press, 1994), 56.

⁸⁸ Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility and English Song*. Vol.2, *Critical Studies of the Early 20th Century*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 276.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Karolyi, 56.

Finzi fully understood Hardy's world of struggle and suffering and the principle of "the implanted crookedness of things", as R. L. Binyon put it.⁹¹

Banfield proclaims that between Hardy and Finzi, there exist both differences and similarities between the poet and composer. He asks: "What drew Gerald Finzi so repeatedly to Hardy's poetry?"⁹² Banfield answers this question first from a spiritual perspective. Finzi "was a second-generation agnostic"⁹³ who was "temperamentally mellower than Hardy."⁹⁴ Hardy often expressed a harsh and intentional rejection of Christianity. Banfield suggests that Finzi's rejection of faith was limited, existing only as feelings of nostalgia. Finzi was a man unable to "accept the Christian myth,"⁹⁵ yet held onto a hope that "its truth might be regenerated for him."⁹⁶

While Finzi's musical approach was simple and somewhat limited in scope, Hardy's command on the English language allowed him to be masterfully dynamic. Hardy's unhappy marriage to his wife Emma "caused him to shoot out dark questionings and self-contradictory philosophies."⁹⁷ Finzi, on the other hand, experienced his unhappiness primarily in childhood, was happily married, and remained "quietly and conscientiously"⁹⁸ devoted to a life of composition. Banfield adds that even when Finzi learned that he had a fatal illness, the composer remained "apparently unrebelling."⁹⁹

Many similarities exist between the two poets and composer as well. The differences, Banfield suggests, are less profound than the similarities. Fundamentally, there existed a sense of isolation under Finzi's seemingly ever-present happiness. Finzi's decision to lead

⁹¹ Ibid., 57.

⁹² Stephen Banfield, *Sensitivity*, 275.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

much of his adult life in rural seclusion was a decision made out of a need for the environmental security so lacking in his childhood.¹⁰⁰

Finzi was often inwardly affected by the events of the world. One such event was the onset of the World War II. Joy Finzi recorded in her journal on March 14, 1938, two days after Germany entered Austria, some of the commentary her husband made:

More persecution for the individuals who do
not fit into a regime of physical force...¹⁰¹

On October 5, 1938, Joy recorded another commentary that captures her husband's sensitivities:

I can feel nothing but the suffering of humanity
and fear for the future of civilization.¹⁰²

Banfield proclaims that the biggest similarity in both composer and poet was a shared sense of "the inexorability of time."¹⁰³ This belief was fostered by the atheistic convictions of both poet and composer. Finzi worked very slowly and would often put a composition aside for a period of time. Often anxiety stricken by the thought that there would never be sufficient time to write all that he envisioned, his anxiety grew ever more real after the composer was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease in 1951.¹⁰⁴ Although the disease rendered the composer somewhat impaired, with the encouragement of his wife, Finzi continued to write. Regarding the inopportune time in which her husband took ill, Joy wrote: "The passing of time at such a vital moment in his life when he was just achieving an easier technique is a constant remorse."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 276.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 276.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 277.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Although both Finzi and Hardy did not believe in a supreme being, Finzi's empathy towards Hardy's fatalistic pessimism only went so far. In a preface to his own works, a catalogue entitled *Absalom's Place*, Finzi makes this point clear. Finzi begins the preface with the statement: "It was Thomas Hardy who wrote 'Why do I go on doing these things?'"¹⁰⁶ Next, Finzi proceeds to answer Hardy's question. Finzi's proposes that by becoming an artist, one takes on certain responsibilities:

...some curious force compels us to preserve and project into the future the essence of our individuality, and, in doing so, to project something of our age and civilization. The artist is like a coral insect, building his reef out of the transitory world around him and making a solid structure to last long after his own fragile and uncertain life.¹⁰⁷

Finzi's statement gives us insight into the composer's artistic philosophy, while also affording us a glimpse into the fragility with which he viewed his existence.¹⁰⁸

As illustrated by his biographical sketch, Gerald Finzi's life included a highly dysfunctional environment in his childhood. His childhood, combined with his reaction to the concerns of civilization during the time in which he composed provided a direction for his philosophy and artistic output. Finzi's fatalistic outlook is an end product of a life of difficulties, death, and despair. Thomas Hardy's poetry reflected the inner turmoil that Finzi experienced.

The Childhood of John Ireland

Other composers of the 1920s and 1930s also found they could relate to the sentiment of Hardy's poetry. One in particular whose art song output reflects a profound association with Thomas Hardy is John Ireland. Not unlike Finzi, Ireland's childhood had

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 277.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

much to do with his personality as a mature composer. Muriel Searle, author of *John Ireland: The Man And His Music*, notes that for Ireland “quality rather than quantity was always his creed.”¹⁰⁹ A critical component to understanding John Ireland lies in recognizing the degree to which his music spawned from a childhood rich in literary influences.¹¹⁰ The second half of this chapter will include a biographical sketch of John Ireland concentrating largely on the events of his younger years, with a special focus on his interest in the poetry of Thomas Hardy.

Alexander Ireland, the composer’s father, had “an intense interest in every aspect of writers and writing. Alexander was introduced to Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1833 upon the author’s first trip to Europe. The composer’s father was charged with giving the American poet a tour of Edinburg. From this event commenced a long-lasting connection between Alexander and his American literary idol.”¹¹¹

In 1839, Alexander Ireland enjoyed a brief marriage to Eliza Mary Blyth of Birmingham who died only three years after they were united in matrimony.¹¹² After 25 years remaining a single widower, Alexander Ireland married Annie Nicholson. Alexander’s bride was thirty years younger and was highly intelligent, excelling as both an author and editor. The couple gave birth to five children, the last of which, John, was separated from his siblings by a seven-year gap of time. Even with five children, Alexander and Annie, owners of a successful printing company, enjoyed a comfortable life and regularly entertained guests of Victorian notoriety. In the 1880’s the couple suffered a sizeable drop in income when readers changed allegiances from the *Manchester Examiner* to the rivaling *Manchester Guardian*.

¹⁰⁹ Muriel Searle, *John Ireland: the man and his music*. (London: Midas, 1979), 5.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

John “Jackie” Ireland was born on August 13th 1879 in Bowdon. John’s relationship with his father was a bit atypical. Searle notes that because Alexander was nearing the age of seventy upon the birth of his youngest son, he was “a little remote-seeming to his children on account of his grandfatherly rather than fatherly age.”¹¹³ John took more of a liking to his mother. However, his mother regularly endured angina pectoris, which confined her primarily to the main rooms in the downstairs of the home. Because John’s father was an older gentleman and his mother a “semi-invalid,”¹¹⁴ John’s older brother Alleyne took responsibility for the punishments of his younger siblings. Searle notes that Alleyne handed out “a leathering”¹¹⁵ as needed.

Both Ireland’s parents promoted his love of music. Searle notes that “constant contact with good music and good books were for Jackie natural facts of life.”¹¹⁶ By the age of eight, John began to show interest in taking piano lessons, “even composing simple tunes long before taking any formal tuition in that art.”¹¹⁷ Indeed, by the turn of the decade, before the boy’s early teens, Ireland had “decided that music meant more to him than to the average youth”¹¹⁸ and he made a life decision to pursue music.

In 1893, Ireland told his mother of his decision to pursue music. Next, without telling anyone, the thirteen-year-old Ireland ventured to London to audition at the Royal College of Music. Searle notes: “he passed in flying colours and was accepted as a full-time student to commence his piano studies in the summer term.”¹¹⁹ Upon his return home, Ireland informed his mother of his day’s adventure. Pride overcame her instinct to punish the boy as she slowly began to realize her son’s uncommon talent. In light of her son’s

¹¹³ Ibid., 8.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 11.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 12.

accomplishment, Annie made monetary arrangements enough to cover his college fees and living expenses. Ireland's modest living accommodations included "lodgings in houses kept by gentlewomen with small incomes, supplemented by letting rooms."¹²⁰

Ireland was fortunate enough at this time to have an opportunity to have this type of accommodations with his sister, who was studying piano at the Royal College of Music. The accommodations came complete with a cat, the variety of household companion that Ireland adored throughout his lifetime. Mrs. Norah Kirby is the interviewed source from whom Searle retrieves much of the information for her book. Kirby is noted in Searle's book as being a companion and confidante of Ireland in his latter years. Regarding the composer's feline friends, Kirby states: "He never forgot a cat, or what he looked like."¹²¹

After Ireland moved to London to study, a queer twist of fate reared its ugly head. Searle notes:

The future seemed bright and reasonably predictable
when fate struck one of those cruel blows which
she appears deliberately to keep in hand for mortals
whose courses seem set too fair.¹²²

Six months after Ireland became a music student, his mother died of a heart attack. There was yet another blow to be issued upon Ireland as well. Searle continues:

Fate had not yet finished with young John Ireland.
Not long after Annie's death, just before the Christmas
of 1894, Alexander joined her in the Hereafter...¹²³

Thus at the tender age of fourteen, John Ireland became an orphan. John's portion of his father's assets was only two-sixteenths. His brother and three sisters, each older than him and well on their way into adulthood, enjoyed inheritances two times the size of his. To

¹²⁰ Ibid., 13.

¹²¹ Ibid., 14.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid., 15.

make things even more difficult, John's portion of the estate was placed in a trust that he would not be allowed to access until he was eighteen.¹²⁴

Ireland's affairs were handed over to guardians, both of whom were lawyers. Searle notes that Ireland, having just lost his parents "needed adult sympathy and advice as well as kindly shoulders to lean on in confidence when times seemed black or studies went badly."¹²⁵ Instead, the relationship offered up by his new guardians was very cold and business-like. Every weekend Ireland suffered a trip to the home of his guardians where they would have lunch then calculate expenses for the upcoming week. Kirby remembers Ireland recollections saying:

Each Sunday his London guardian carefully calculated his expenditure... for the coming week, and gave him a sufficient sum to cover it, making him enter every item of expenditure into a black leather account book to be scrutinized before the following Sunday's luncheon, after which he gave the boy his usual weekly allowance. This meant that "luxuries" were condemned as extravagance, and deducted from the following week's allowance.¹²⁶

Searle adds: "The handing-over process was usually accompanied by a grim lecture on thrift...every pre-decimalized ha'peny spent...accounted for in that black book of reckoning."¹²⁷

As a result, Ireland sought out accompanying work.¹²⁸ He often took engagements at social events, the money from which was his own to spend as he pleased. Ireland also took

¹²⁴ Ibid., 15.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

on organ playing jobs at different churches. Searle notes that a second instrument of study was a demand of his program of study, and so Ireland chose the organ.¹²⁹

Now at the age of fifteen, Ireland decided on a career in composition, rather than piano performance. This decision cemented in his head, he began his quest for a composition teacher. Searle makes the observation “It is not easy, when scanning a musical dictionary, to find many composers of late 19th century origin without the repetitive tag ‘studied with Stanford’.”¹³⁰

Ireland greatly admired Stanford. He asked the professor many times in passing if he might join his composition studio, but got no positive response. Taking it upon himself to visit to Stanford’s office armed with one of his own compositions, Ireland sustained a powerful jab by the arrogant teacher. Upon one look at Ireland’s work, he cried out “Dull as ditchwater, me b’hoj. Take it away.”¹³¹ As if by grace, Stanford changed his mind shortly thereafter and made arrangements for Ireland’s piece to be featured at College pupil’s concert. In the audience that night was the esteemed composer Hubert Parry who was at that time serving as director of the Royal College of Music. Halfway through the piece, Parry ventured over to Ireland and said “Capital my boy, Capital! You are a composition scholar.”¹³² The very next day, equipped with the approval of the college’s director, Ireland confronted Stanford saying “Sir! I’m a composition scholar. Will you take me now!”¹³³

Regarding Ireland’s work with Stanford, Searle notes:

Ireland worked with his hero from 1897 to 1901,
Thus earning the biographical entry for his generation,
‘Studied under Stanford.’¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Ibid., 17.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 19.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid., 20.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

Trevor Hold, in his book *Parry To Finzi: Twenty English Song-Composers* notes that Stanford's strict brand of teaching was not appreciated by Ireland until later in his career when he realized the "strong sense of criticism and sound technique" it instilled in him.

In 1896, Ireland accepted a position as an assistant organist at Holy Trinity a church in London that boasted a particularly excellent organ. The salary, however, paled in comparison to the grandeur of the church's beautiful instrument. Too young to assume the position of head organist once it became available, Ireland was offered the job as organist at Holy Trinity's daughter church, St. Jude's in Chelsea.¹³⁵

By 1900, Ireland was granted his access to the funds due to him from his father's estate. This was a significant event for a composer such as Ireland, whose personality demanded quality over quantity. The composer would always be able to write at his own pace, never having to compose less than excellent material in order to support himself. At this time, Ireland added the job of choirmaster at St. Luke's in Chelsea to his workload. Ireland would stay at St. Luke's twenty-five years.¹³⁶

The Development of Ireland's Philosophy and Compositional Style

Ireland's excellent choice of poetry came not only as a result of the strength of his literary background, but also out of a need for material containing depth enough to express his inner-most emotions. The composer possessed a desire to steer clear of poetry that expressed emotion only on a superficial level. Trevor Hold comments on the idea of Ireland's ability to tap into poetry of significance, he writes:

Nor was he afraid to express deeply felt emotion,
Choosing poets whose words and sentiments elicited
a strong personal response.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Searle, 22.

¹³⁶ Searle, 23.

¹³⁷ Hold, 186.

Ireland's choice of poets challenged him as a composer to write music worthy of the words which he was setting. Speaking to this very point Hold adds the names of the composers who's words provided Ireland's inspiration:

The poets to whom he returned again and again.
were Houseman (10), Hardy (9), D.G. Rossetti (5)
and Symons (5), and of these it was Hardy and
Housman who drew from him his finest, most
original music.¹³⁸

Indeed, Ireland's choice poets allowed him to compose a storybook of his life. This, says Hold, is what makes Ireland "the compleat [*sic*] romantic song-composer."¹³⁹ He adds that, when compiled together, Ireland's songs "form a spiritual diary."¹⁴⁰ Hold writes:

The autobiographical element present in all his
music is particularly noticeable in those songs where
his feelings are articulated through the words of the
poets with whom he felt special empathy.¹⁴¹

Singer Peter Pears once commented on Ireland's "edgy pessimistic nature."¹⁴² To this Hold adds, "the phrase could sum up Ireland's musical personality too."¹⁴³ What seem to be light hearted moments in Thomas Hardy's poetry are usually just moments of satire used to mask the poet's real feelings. Likewise, one can accurately assume the same type of denial masquerading behind superficial layers of Ireland's more up-tempo ballads. Regarding this point, Hold writes: "Even in his serenest songs...one feels a sadness lurking in the wings. There is a bittersweetness about all his best music."¹⁴⁴

The similarities between Ireland and Hardy are uncanny regarding their pessimism, an attitude rooted in the spiritual ideology of fatalism. Hold notes:

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 212.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

His two large-scale Houseman and Hardy cycles have a bleak fatalism, which not only matches that of his poets, but expresses his own lonely outlook on life.¹⁴⁵

Also tying Ireland to Hardy was the preoccupation both artists shared with nature. In the pages of her book *The Music of John Ireland*, Fiona Richards brings attention to the intimate link between man and nature that is so prevalent in Hardy's poetry. Highlighted in Hardy's works is the dichotomy that exists in the relationship between man and nature. In Hardy's world, nature can act "both as a place of refuge and a place of terror."¹⁴⁶

Fiona Richards also gives insight into the composer's spiritual background. John Ireland worked for the Anglican Church for most his life and was sincere in his commitment to his faith for a big portion of his life. In his later years, Ireland's faith deteriorated and he began to doubt its very tenets. Richards notes:

Ireland was a practicing Anglican for most of his life, and read the Bible on a regular basis. His faith was genuine, but as he grew older, increasingly tinged with cynicism.¹⁴⁷

How sincere was Ireland's faith? There exist a collection of letters that Ireland wrote Father Kenneth Thompson between 1936 and 1961. The letters reveal that Ireland's doubts regarding religion came in stressful times. Richards notes: For Ireland, a traumatic incident was often the catalyst for an outpouring, and a questioning of the reason for religion. In July of 1936, when a close friend of his died of blood poisoning, Ireland expressed feelings of disillusionment with a God who could allow such things to happen, he exclaims:

I cannot see why, if there is a God who knows individually the life of all his creations...that a man of blameless life, of purest heart, of the very finest & most stable character, can be

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Fiona Richards, *The Music of John Ireland*. (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 80.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 37.

struck down, & wasted, in this way, - causing the very bitterest grief to all his relatives & friends.¹⁴⁸

Another very revealing letter regarding faith is one that the composer wrote to a friend, Arthur Robert Lee Gardner. In this letter he challenges his friend's assuredness in the powers of the Holy Spirit. Ireland expresses that he has a higher level of certainty that Evil exists than he does in any supernatural force of Good. Ireland's interest in Catholicism, and specifically, the composer's "fascination with the ritualistic aspects of religious ceremony"¹⁴⁹ is also very evident in this letter. Ireland writes:

I am much interested in what you say about the Christian faith. If, as you say, you are definitely convinced of a Holy Spiritual Influence on this earth and that the Christian faith is a fact – then you have got a good deal further than I have. I used to think so – but now I feel very uncertain about it. I am much more certain that there is an Evil Spiritual Influence on this earth – which is very much in evidence... If I could really feel convinced of the other proposition, I think I should feel the only logical thing to do would be to become a Roman Catholic- which faith combines Christianity with Magic. Indeed, I wish I could! At present, I am unable to experience that personal contact with Jesus Christ which seems to be the essence of Christianity, as a practicing religion.¹⁵⁰

Gerald Finzi and John Ireland: Similar Lives and Similar Philosophies

Gerald Finzi and John Ireland both experienced childhoods containing circumstances of death, isolation and rejection. Sadly, both composers suffered the loss of important family members early in their life. Also plaguing the childhood of each composer was a sense of isolation. Interestingly, England's foremost composition teacher, Charles Stanford, initially rejected both composers. Because of the bleak circumstances encapsulated

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 38.

¹⁵⁰ John Ireland to Arthur Robert Lee Gardener, 23 July 1944, Miscellaneous item held at the John Ireland Trust, quoted in Fiona Richards, *The Music of John Ireland*. (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 37.

within each of their childhoods, Finzi and Ireland each came to a similar conclusion: each believed nature and time were their enemies. Spiritually speaking, instead of seeking a supreme power with which neither composer could relate, both Finzi and Ireland turned to an author whose poetry seemed to describe the world in which they lived.

CHAPTER 3
GERALD FINZI AND JOHN IRELAND:
A STYLISTIC COMPARISON OF COMPOSITIONAL APPROACHES
IN THE CONTEXT OF TEN SELECTED POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY

Finzi, Ireland and The Hardy Problem: An Introduction

Stephen Banfield notes that Ireland and Finzi “achieved the best rapport with serious verse.”¹⁵¹ Both of them, adds Banfield, “tackled Hardy at his most pregnant.”¹⁵² When one examines his poetry it is easily deduced that a Hardy who is “at his most pregnant” is a Hardy who does much to stretch the time-honored rules of poetry. Music historian Trevor Hold is quite accurate when he makes the simple point that Hardy’s poetry “presents the composer with problems.”¹⁵³ Hardy’s fatalistic philosophy is “not a sentiment universally held, least of all amongst song writers.”¹⁵⁴ Another problem is found within Hardy’s use of language. On a surface-level, Hardy’s language makes use of “antique phrases, Dorset dialect-words, and Anglo-Saxonisms”¹⁵⁵ (Appendix A, Text C). In his writing, Hold makes the point that the two most important features the song-composer looks at when considering a poem are “line-length and stanza shape.”¹⁵⁶ Ideal to many composers, Hold notes, are poems with short, four-line stanzas. Regarding Hardy, these credentials “are the last thing he requires”¹⁵⁷ because “their squareness restricts.”¹⁵⁸ Hold concludes that with enough determination, a composer can work through these difficulties. Making the claim that Hardy’s poetry is worthy of a musical setting, Hold writes: “the aptness of his poetry

¹⁵¹ Stephen Banfield, ed., *The Twentieth Century: The Blackwell History of Music in Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1995), 471.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Hold. *Parry to Finzi*, 401.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

for musical treatment far outweighs the difficulties.”¹⁵⁹ This chapter will discuss the ways in which composers Gerald Finzi and John Ireland approached the eccentricities of Hardy’s poetry within the context of selected songs by each composer.

Summer Schemes: An Example of the Hardy Problem

Hardy’s poetry is irregular on many accounts. Within Hardy’s poetry, these irregularities can be observed in the variation of its stanza-shapes, length of its lines and the unconventional nature of its rhyming patterns. Hold notes that Hardy:

invented an amazing diversity of stanza shapes, varying short lines with long, adopting irregular rhyming patterns and making original use of refrains.¹⁶⁰

With the exception of Hardy’s poem *Her Temple*, found in both Finzi’s *A Young Man’s Exhortation*, and Ireland’s *Five Poems by Thomas Hardy*, the only other of Hardy’s poems set by both Finzi and Ireland is Hardy’s *Summer Schemes*. Since this paper focuses on the baritone repertoire of each composer, a comparison between settings of *Her Temple* was not included as Finzi’s song is in the tenor repertoire. *Summer Schemes* illustrates each of the above described eccentricities of the ingenious poet. Take, for example the opening stanza:

When friendly summer calls again,
 Calls again
Her little fifers to these hills,
We’ll go – we two – to that arched fane
Of leafage where they prime their bills
Before they start to flood the plain
With quavers, minims, shakes and trills.
 ‘We’ll go,’ I said; but who shall say
 What may not chance before that day!¹⁶¹

The eccentricities of Hardy’s poetry are not always apparent or definable upon a first reading. This may in fact be the case in the above quoted stanza. With the exception of the

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 402.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

short restatement of the words “calls again,” each line contains eight syllables, thereby lending the poem its symmetry. The rhyming scheme, however, is irregular. The first two lines rhyme, line three rhymes with line five, four with six and five with seven, and line eight rhymes with line nine. Thus the every-other-line rhyming scheme is framed on its top and its bottom by a pair of consecutively rhyming lines. Another oddity is the short portion of the stanza contained between two hyphens; the parenthetical phrase “we too” seems to be an interruption of the line’s lyrical flow.

In Hardy’s defense, Hold writes of the lyrical, even musical, aspects inherent in Hardy’s poetry:

Few major poets had such a natural talent for the lyric-writer’s art. Many of his major poems he conceived with half-an-ear to musical setting- in some cases he even went as far as to specify the *mode* that the composer should adopt.¹⁶²

Hold solidifies his point saying: “of the 900 or so poems that Hardy wrote, one in eight has musical associations.”¹⁶³

There are some primary difficulties that stand out in Hardy’s poetry. These difficulties Hold coins “anti-lyrical”¹⁶⁴ factors. Although Hardy utilizes formal stanzas, he sets out to destroy the symmetry they achieved “by counterpointing his thoughts through the stanza.”¹⁶⁵ Hold further clarifies his point by defining three scenarios that typify the way Hardy sets his thoughts down asymmetrically within the formalized structure of a traditional stanza:

his sentences come to rest within a line or flow on from one line to another, or in some cases

¹⁶² Ibid., 401.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 403.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

from stanza to stanza.¹⁶⁶

Indeed, *Summer Schemes* reflects many of Hardy's characteristics as mapped out above. Hardy's words in *Summer Schemes* come to rest in the middle of a line. In the text: 'fane of leafage,' for example, it feels as though the sentence ought to stop after the word 'leafage'. Instead, Hardy continues the sentence, turning a single sentence into a lengthy phrase. Hardy uses such lengthy phrases to create verse wherein his thoughts are seamless. Indeed, Hardy's thoughts in *Summer Schemes* rest only at momentary instances of cadence. Instead, the lines in *Summer Schemes* simply "flow on from one line to another,"¹⁶⁷ allowing Hardy's words to continue in a free-flowing stream of consciousness.

***Summer Schemes* : As Set by Gerald Finzi**

In order to accommodate Hardy's lengthy initial phrase in *Summer Schemes*, Gerald Finzi composed a vocal line that is nineteen measures long and void of rests. Additionally, Finzi accommodates the "chunks" of Hardy's prose-like text by changing meter seven times within the initial nineteen measures of the vocal line. The seven changes in meter (in the progression 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, 4/4, 3/2, 4/4, 3/2, 4/4) are hardly detectable because Finzi uses them in a way that is masterful in its syllabic declamation of the text. The combination of Finzi's rhythmic durations and Hardy's prose-like text make the first nineteen bars of *Summer Schemes* remarkably speech-like in nature.

Banfield notes that Finzi builds on the sonata form already inherent in Hardy's poem. It should be noted, however, that Finzi has herein stretched the conventions of sonata form. Much like Hardy, who liked to take established literary forms and stretch them to the full extent of their elasticity, Finzi's *Summer Schemes* leaves us with a mere skeleton of a

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

sonata form. Finzi summed up his rather experimental viewpoint regarding musical form in a the following statement:

When a work can't be fitted to preconceived ideas
they call it "formless." Formality has about as much
to do with form as bugs with buggery.¹⁶⁸

Buggery, in this instance, is British slang for homosexuality. Finzi is making the point that buggery, a man-made classification system for categorizing some people as homosexuals, does not limit what kind of people could be homosexual. Likewise, formality's role in the compositional process of a piece ought not to be limited to preconceived ideals about compositional forms.

Given Finzi's viewpoint on form, Banfield's formal analysis of *Summer Schemes* should be regarded as abstract in its implications. To get an idea of how Hardy's *Summer Schemes* lends itself to sonata form, one must look at its structure. Banfield first notes that the poem contains two parallel stanzas. Each stanza, notes Banfield, is fairly long and contains within its structure a thesis as its first seven lines and an antithesis as its last two lines (Appendix A, Text A). This is vaguely similar to the theme and codetta ideals of sonata form. Banfield notes that Finzi uses Hardy's poetic refrains in stanza I (denoted by the text "calls again" and "We'll go") to signal the divisions within the song. Finzi uses a descending fourth on the texts "calls again" (Example 1) and "We'll go" (Example 2) to designate these poetic refrains (Appendix A, Text B). One might say that the beginning of the Hardy's refrain (Appendix A, Text B) looks nothing like what is expected of a refrain because it starts in the middle of a sentence. *Summer Schemes* illustrates Hardy's habit of "making an original use of refrains."¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ Gerald Finzi to Thorpe Davie quoted in Stephen Banfield *Gerald Finzi: An English Composer*, 214.

¹⁶⁹ Hold, 402.

Also supporting its sonata form is the harmonic movement in the middle of the first stanza toward the dominant (at the first “We’ll go”) (Example 2) Finzi uses Hardy’s second stanza to provide the material needed for development and recapitulation. The first subject of the recapitulation (starting at “We shall, I say”) includes a recap of earlier sung material, but then deviates from a true return at its second subject.¹⁷⁰

The image shows a musical score for three measures of a song. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom two staves are the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. The tempo markings are 'poco rit.' and 'A tempo'. The lyrics are: 'When friend - ly sum-mer calls a-gain, Calls a-gain'. The piano part features a descending fourth interval in the right hand, which is highlighted as the beginning of the refrain. The piano part is marked 'p' (piano).

Example 1: Finzi’s *Summer Schemes* in m.3 the descending fourth designates beginning of the refrain.

To conjure up the nature of the antithetical refrain, Finzi has made musical choices in accordance with the fatalism of Hardy’s poetry. Banfield notes that although the five bars of piano introduction (Example 3) “conjures up a miraculous degree of lyrical warmth,”¹⁷¹ the composer “soon reiterates the antithetical refrain”¹⁷² (Example 2) see also (Appendix A, Text C). Banfield notes that the song ends in “a sunny D major,”¹⁷³ (Example 4) a gesture that illustrates the ever so slight glimmer of hope which is part of Finzi’s personality, this gracious gesture is one the poet might not afford us, had he himself set the poem to music. Trevor Hold, on the other hand, notes the modal inflection at the very end of the piece,

¹⁷⁰ Stephen Banfield. *Sensibility*, 291.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

found in the last six bars of the piano calling these bars “unexpectedly telling”¹⁷⁴ (Example 4). Not only does the modal material give the piece a small, but effective touch of folk influence as is prevalent in the music of Vaughn Williams, but it also works to dull the joyful euphoria stirred up by the happier portions of the song. Instead of being left with a feeling of assurance, we are instead left with feelings of apprehension.¹⁷⁵

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a vocal and piano piece. The first system (measures 26-30) shows a vocal line with lyrics: "We'll go," I sing; but. The piano accompaniment features a descending fourth interval in the right hand and a rhythmic pattern in the left hand. Tempo markings include 'rit.' and 'poco accel.'. The second system (measures 31-33) continues the vocal line with lyrics: who shall say What may not chance be-fore that. The piano accompaniment is marked 'mp'. The third system (measures 34-37) shows the vocal line with the word 'day!' and a final note. The piano accompaniment is marked 'mf' and 'p'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 2: Finzi’s *Summer Schemes* in mm. 28-29 the descending fourth designates beginning of refrain. In mm. 28-29 the harmonic movement is toward the dominant.

¹⁷⁴ Hold, 396.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

Example 3: Finzi's *Summer Schemes* Piano introduction: note its lyricism, denoted by its legato phrase markings.

Example 4: Finzi's *Summer Schemes*: final bars seem to be in D major, however, note mm. 72-73; a brief instance of modal inflection.

***Summer Schemes* as Set by John Ireland**

When describing Ireland's music, Trevor Hold makes the claim that the composer uses as compositional tools a battery of several musical symbols. For "stoicism,"¹⁷⁶ Ireland composes "a falling fifth"¹⁷⁷ (Example 6) Ireland symbolizes "ecstasy"¹⁷⁸ (Example 5), a concept Hold describes as "the timeless moment when the beauty of nature is captured by the individual,"¹⁷⁹ by use of "murmuring alternation of chords, usually (though not always) adjacent triads,"¹⁸⁰ a technique Ireland probably discovered in the music of Ravel and Debussy.

Describing Ireland's tonal scheme in *Summer Schemes*, Hold notes the "two long stanzas...are given two different, reflecting tonalities."¹⁸¹ In regard to the first of Ireland's strophic stanzas, Hold notes that the composer chose "A-flat major modulating through to A major in the first verse and A-major back to A-flat major for the second."¹⁸² One might propose that when the first tonality, A-flat major, leads to the second tonality, A-major, the modulation in the upward direction represents the excitement and anticipation of the upcoming summer months. Likewise, one might say that Ireland's second modulation downward to return to A-flat major reflects the sensibility, or return to reality so apparent in nature of the Hardy's words.

Elaborating on Ireland's "musical symbols," within the context of *Summer Schemes*, Hold notes that they start to assume their prominence when "the rippling 'ecstasy' symbol emerges in the first verse at the first sharpwards modulation."¹⁸³ Specifically, Hold is

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 203.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

referring to the alternating of chords occurring after the text “with quavers, minims, shakes and trills.” This alternating of chords creates what Hold refers to as “murmuring”¹⁸⁴ (Example 5). In contrast with the ecstasy symbol, when the words are those of questioning and uncertainty as in ‘but who shall say, What may not chance before that day!’ Hold notes: “we hear the ominous ‘stoical’ falling fifth”¹⁸⁵ (Example 6).

The musical score for Example 5 consists of three systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff).
 - System 1 (measures 14-15): The vocal line has the lyrics "Be - fore they start to". The piano accompaniment features a series of alternating chords in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand.
 - System 2 (measures 16-17): The vocal line has the lyrics "flood the plain With quav - ers, min - ims, shakes, and". The piano accompaniment continues with alternating chords, marked with a *poco f* dynamic.
 - System 3 (measures 18-20): The vocal line has the lyrics "trills. "We'll go," I sing:". The piano accompaniment features a more complex texture with rapid chordal movement in the right hand, marked with *dim.* and *mf* dynamics.

Example 5: Ireland’s *Summer Schemes* mm.18-19 murmuring effect of alternating chords: Ireland’s ‘ecstasy’ symbol.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 203.

Example 6: Ireland’s *Summer Schemes*: falling fifth in m. 22 represents Ireland’s ‘stoical’ symbol.

Additional Examples of Hardy’s Poetry Set by Gerald Finzi

- **Song: *The Phantom* (Finzi)**

Song set of origin: *Earth and Air and Rain*

Poem serving as source of lyrics: *The Phantom Horsewoman*

Poem’s collection of origin: *Satires of Circumstance*

Hardy’s *The Phantom Horsewoman*, contained within a collection of his poems entitled *Satires of Circumstance*, was written during the period of time immediately following the death of his wife. The poem is one of the poet’s most impressive works. *The Phantom Horsewoman* typifies many of Hardy poetic traits. One of these traits, as explained earlier by Trevor Hold, is Hardy’s tendency to “counterpoint his thoughts.” In *The Phantom Horsewoman* Hardy sustains his thought process by linking stanzas together in a seamless fashion and waiting until the end of the poem to come to a complete cadence. *The Phantom Horsewoman* illustrates Hardy’s practice of first creating a formal stanza pattern, then intentionally “destroying” it. Key to Hardy’s “destruction” in this instance is his rhyming scheme (Appendix A, Text D). Of the nine lines in each stanza his scheme is such: Line 1 rhymes with lines 8 and 9, while line 2 rhymes with line 4, line 3 rhymes with line 5 and line 4 rhymes with line 6, and line 5 rhymes with line 7.

Set by the composer in 1932, *The Phantom* is the fourth installment in Finzi’s song set entitled *Earth and Air and Rain*. This song set, according to Trevor Hold, is “the finest of his

sequences...the most varied, unified and emotionally satisfying.” In *The Phantom*, Finzi illustrates his ability to utilize “extremely flexible word setting” in order to follow the poet’s “train of thought.” Important words in the text are given longer durations and are quite often approached by an ascending or descending leap. A master in the realm of text-setting, Finzi is able to do this “without difficulty, and creates (a) complex, through-composed song structure.”¹⁸⁶

Stephen Banfield notes that *The Phantom* marks a point in Finzi’s career when his music assumes a definite character. Banfield writes that Finzi’s effective use of *idée fixe* combined with a good sense of pacing “makes it one of his finest achievements.”¹⁸⁷ The dotted-eighth--sixteenth--eighth ascending motive, representing the gallop of a horse, is the most prevalent use of a reoccurring motive (*idée fixe*) in the piece (Example 7). Banfield adds that the overall success of the piece is largely dependent on its accompaniment. Banfield notes:

Finzi has suddenly learnt how to give a song both instant character and lasting momentum through the use of simple, flexible and vivid accompaniment motif- something which Schubert or any of the *Lied* composers could have taught him years earlier.¹⁸⁸

In reference to the manner in which Finzi musically portrays the phantom horse rider, Hold feels this is an area in which the piece falls short, he notes: “Finzi’s phantom horse-rider seems insipid, lacking horror or fearsomeness.”¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 403.

¹⁸⁷ Stephen Banfield. *Gerald Finzi: An English Composer*, 184.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Hold, 407.



Example 7: Finzi's *The Phantom*. Reoccurring ascending motive (*idée fixe*) representing the gallop of a horse.

The motivic lines running throughout the left and right hands in *The Phantom* maintain their individual prominence because of their ability to “keep out of each other’s way.”¹⁹⁰ On the other hand, the scattered nature of their running about “guarantees the ‘quasi-symphonic effect’”¹⁹¹ that defines one of Finzi’s greatest strengths. Characteristic of its contrapuntal nature, one can trace the melodic line within the accompaniment as its contour weaves from right hand, down to left hand and back up to the right. Finzi makes his intentions known in regard to the highly lyrical nature of the accompaniment by including markings such as legato pedaling (suggested by phrase markings) and lines drawn to show the movement of the melodic theme from bass to treble clef (Example 8 and Example 9). Finzi’s piano part paints a vast “landscape”.

By allowing the piano to assume a bigger role, the voice then takes on a different perspective, that of an “observer.”¹⁹²

Banfield further clarifies his point writing:

the voice is cast as an observer, or viewpoint,
not as an enactor or mimic.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 185.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid., 187.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

There is a tremendous degree of intimacy reached in Finzi's *The Phantom*. Banfield attributes this to the baritone tessitura to which the composer turned for this particular piece.

Example 8: Finzi's *The Phantom*: highly lyrical accompaniment marked by legato pedaling. In m.4, the melodic interest switches from treble to bass clef.

Example 9: Finzi's *The Phantom*: legato pedaling mm.111-115 and lines drawn to show movement of melodic theme from betwixt bass and treble clefs.

The intimacy afforded by pen that inked *The Phantom*, was “rarely achieved in the earlier songs for tenor.”¹⁹⁴ What was it about the baritone voice that created such intimacy? According to Banfield, intimacy is achieved especially well in the baritone voice because its range “represent(s) the authentic, vernacular voice of the poet’s experience.”¹⁹⁵ More

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

specifically, Banfield links the depth of the baritone voice to “secrecy”¹⁹⁶ and he links the height of the baritone voice to “earnestness”¹⁹⁷ (rather than a beautiful *cantabile*¹⁹⁸). He notes that this intimacy is especially important in interpreting Hardy’s brand of poetry. Banfield notes that, because the range of the baritone voice, “even with bits of falsetto at the top,”¹⁹⁹ it is a voice part that possesses an uncanny ability to portray private moments with the degree of earnestness and secrecy that they require.²⁰⁰

Throughout the piece, Finzi provides “the casual snatch”²⁰¹ of tuneful material. Banfield writes that these short, tuneful motives were the result of Finzi’s intermittent bouts of “spontaneous, piecemeal inspiration.”²⁰² He cites this as being a byproduct of Finzi’s work habits. This technique of writing “snapshots” of tuneful material parallels Hardy’s style of writing poetry that captures short moments in time (Example 10).

Example 10: Finzi’s *The Phantom*: the motivic material in piano propels the piece forward.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Stephen Banfield. *Gerald Finzi: An English Composer*, 185.

²⁰² Ibid.

The piece (especially the vocal line) is in small chunks, some more melodic than others, but propelled forward via motivic material in the accompaniment.

Although the song starts out with a piano introduction containing a fair degree of rhythmic interest (the music characterizes the oncoming Phantom riding horseback), the material initially presented in the vocal line is non-tuneful. Then, after only a few bars, there is a glimpse of a tune in the words “a man I know” the song continues to propel itself forward at a moderate pace, then there is a sudden change in mood. At the text: “moveless hands/ And face and gaze,” using only three three-bar phrases, Finzi slows the piece down to accommodate a moment in Hardy’s poetry calling for “time and place suddenly enter another dimension.”²⁰³

• **Song: *Rollicum Rorum* (Finzi)**

Song set of origin: *Earth and Air and Rain*

Poem serving as source of lyrics: *The Sergeant’s Song*

Poem’s collection of origin: a narrative from his novel *The Trumpet Major*

In Hardy’s *The Sergeant’s Song*, we see colloquial phrases such as “practice what they preach,” “march his men on London town,” “When justices hold equal scales,” “the Poorman’s Purse,” “husbands with their wives agree,” and “maids won’t wed from modesty.” Although these phrases stir up a certain familiarity, we would rarely expect to see them used in lyrical poetry. However, Hardy’s choice to include them gives this poem a certain bourgeois appeal. This type of “homeliness,”²⁰⁴ as Banfield coins it, is also inherent to Finzi’s setting of a portion of the poem which he entitles *Rollicum-Rorum*.

If there is a melodic folk influence in Hardy’s poetry, Banfield writes, “it is the sort of folksong that is closest to the homeliness of a hymn tune.”²⁰⁵ Finzi’s vocal lines illustrate the composer’s desire to observe, reflect, and preserve the essence of the poet’s voice. In his

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility*. 281.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

melody for *Rollicum-rorum*, for example, rather than decorative turns and virtuosic runs, Banfield makes the observation that there exists:

the sort of thing which we might expect to make up ourselves were we to try to sing a line of Hardy's poetry, and in this they could hardly be more different from Britten's floral, decorative melodic inventions.²⁰⁶

Simple rather than florid, Finzi's melodies seem to have a "rightness"²⁰⁷ about them.

Within all his songs, the purity with which Finzi tackles word-setting is remarkable. Banfield comments that Finzi's "shaping his melodic contours to rise and fall of the conversing or reciting voice"²⁰⁸ is surpassed only by his thorough observance of the "for every syllable a note"²⁰⁹ dictum. The grace note dictated on the word "pouncing" in *Rollicum-rorum*, marks one of only two instances in all Finzi's Hardy settings that calls for a syllable set to two notes²¹⁰ (Example 11).

The image displays a musical score for a vocal and piano setting. It consists of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 10 to 12. The vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics: "Then Bo - ney he'll come pounc - ing down, And". Measure 12 features a grace note on the syllable "ing". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) includes dynamics like *sf* and *p*. The second system covers measures 13 and 14. The vocal line has lyrics: "march his men on Lon - don town!". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and melodic lines.

Example 11: Finzi's *Rollicum Rorum*: the grace note in m.12 represents a rare instance of more than one note per syllable in Finzi's song literature.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 282.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

• **Song: *The Clock of the Years* (Finzi)**

Song set of origin: *Earth and Air and Rain*

Poem serving as source of lyrics: *The Clock of the Years*

Poem's collection of origin : *Lyrics and Reveries*

Hardy's poem *The Clock of the Years*, as is the case with many of his poems, is prefaced with biblical scripture. In this case Hardy has chosen a passage from the *Book of Job*: "A spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up." The spiritual force representing one of the two characters in *The Clock of the Years* has the power to make time go backwards, but only as he sees fit. The poet, the character with which the spirit converses throughout the poem, has his beloved brought back to life, then into her youth, childhood, babyhood, and lastly into non-existence, or as Hardy proclaims textually: "it was as if she had never been."

The Clock of the Years the eighth installment in Finzi's song set *Earth and Air and Rain*, begins with a recitative-like melody. In *The Clock of the Years*, Finzi's masterful word-setting "guarantees him an assurance in tackling Hardy's idiosyncratic, rough-grained conceit"²¹¹ while at the same time "keeping them intact."²¹² However, it can also be said that the composer's allegiance to the poet can, at times, leave him at a disadvantage. Banfield notes that by upholding the integrity of the text, Finzi is left with little choice but to create a vocal line that is little more than a "functional code"²¹³ or "an unemotional slow recitative."²¹⁴

Indeed, Finzi's reaction to setting Hardy's more non-lyric poems was to use recitative-like lines that boarder on prosody rather than melody. On December 5, 1933, upon observing this very point, critic Marion Scott wrote:

It is curious to see how the musician has reacted to the slightly non-lyric touch that checks the singing

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

quality in so many of Hardy's poems. Mr. Finzi reflects this non-lyricism by vocal lines and verbal rhythms that deviate from melody towards prosody. The process is very subtle and, at times successful; but one wonders whether in some instances he would not have been justified in overriding Hardy with pure singing tunes that would have expressed the poems without too much deference to the spoken word values.²¹⁵

In fact, the composer makes us aware of his conscious decision, marking the opening to *The Clock of the Years* "Recit: Dramatico." The melodrama of the opening vocal material, remarks Banfield, "is an excellent pretext for a tiny solo cantata."²¹⁶ Following the opening recitative, the remainder of the song is composed of "instrumental tropes"²¹⁷ betwixt "small portions of arioso"²¹⁸ (Example 12). Each of the portions of arioso, Banfield points out, "are signaled by...an upbeat figure"²¹⁹ which is then followed by "the comfort of a lilting, settled accompaniment pattern."²²⁰

Although some of his critics remarked upon *The Clock of the Years* with sour criticisms, Trevor Hold praises the composer's craftiness in *The Clock of the Years*, bringing attention to "Finzi's genius in handling what for most composers would be an intractable poem."²²¹ As evidence for his observation, Hold cites the phrase in the song marked by the text "He shook his head:/No stop was there" noting "the masterly way in which he moves from duple to triple meter"²²² (Example 13). The piece starts out free of meter. The introductory recitative contains no time signature. Following the recitative, the initial portion of arioso is in 4/4 meter. In order to accommodate Hardy's uneven textual phrases,

²¹⁵ Ibid., 283.

²¹⁶ Stephen Banfield. *Gerald Finzi: An English Composer*, 210.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Hold, 409.

²²² Ibid.

which are more like prose than poetry in this instance, Finzi changes meter four more times within the remaining forty-four bars of the piece. Within the scope of the entire song, Finzi brings the piece through the following metrical progression: free meter (without time signature), 4/4, 7/8, 6/8, 4/4, 2/4. Also noteworthy is Hold's observation that Finzi "deliberately builds silences into his texture."²²³ These instances of silence add much to the dramatic content of the piece and ought to be observed. When the performer strictly adheres to the amount of rest prescribed by the composer, the element of silence achieves its dramatic purpose. The suspense created by the rests gives the performer and his or her audience the opportunity to fully digest the bit of Hardy's drama which has already been performed while building suspense for that which is to come.

The musical score for Example 12 is presented in three systems. Each system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff).
 - System 1 (bars 25-27): The vocal line begins with a rest at bar 25, followed by the lyrics "And smalled till she was nought at all in his". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a harmonic accompaniment in the left hand.
 - System 2 (bars 28-32): The vocal line has a rest at bar 28, followed by "check-less griff;" and another rest at bar 30, then "And it was as if She had". The piano accompaniment includes a dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo) at bar 31.
 - System 3 (bars 33-38): The vocal line has a rest at bar 33, followed by "ne-ver been." and a final rest at bar 38. The piano accompaniment features a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) at bar 34 and *p* (piano) at bar 36.

Example 12: Finzi: *The Clock of the Years*: instrumental/arioso exchanges.

²²³ Ibid.

13 14 15
But a - las for me. He shook his head:

mp

16 17
No stop was there; And she waned child -

18 19
fair, And to ba - by - hood.

p

Example 13: Finzi's *The Clock of the Years* mm. 15-16: note Finzi's masterful declamation of the text via a seamless change in meter.

- **Song:** *Channel Firing* (Finzi)
- Song set of origin: *Before and After Summer*
- Poem serving as source of lyrics: *Channel Firing*
- Poem's collection of origin: *Satires of Circumstance*

Hardy's general philosophies regarding God, war, and fate are each made evident in *Channel Firing*, one of his most masterful works of poetry. Burton Parker notes:

Here the irony of fate is God represented to be manipulating events as though deliberately

frustrating and mocking the protagonist.²²⁴

The poem is epic in length, utilizing four-line stanzas each of which employ the same rhyme scheme abab, cdcd, etc. Although the poem is “in syllabic line form, having eight syllables to each line,”²²⁵ Parker notes that each line has “a different accentuation scheme.”²²⁶ Trevor Hold gives a succinct summarization of the poem’s content, writing: “it describes the effects of gunnery practice at sea on the confined inhabitants of a churchyard.”²²⁷ In true Hardy fashion, the poem has a grim nature, but Finzi is able to find within its content “a lyrical core.”²²⁸ The centerpiece, explains Banfield, is “God’s anti-war sermon.”²²⁹ The depth of the poem’s irony is found in the Parson’s remark that so greatly contrasts the expected viewpoint of a Godly man. About three quarters of the way into the song, the Parson proclaims: “I wish I had stuck to pipes and beer.”

Within his opening bars, Finzi’s setting provides a ‘gun-firing’ motive which, as Hold notes, “acts as a ritornello to draw the pieces of the jigsaw together”²³⁰ (Example 14).

The image shows a musical score for three introductory bars of a piano piece. The score is written for piano (Piano) and is in 4/4 time. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The first bar is marked with a first ending bracket (1) and a first ending fermata. The second bar is marked with a second ending bracket (2) and a second ending fermata. The third bar is marked with a third ending bracket (3) and a third ending fermata. The right hand (treble clef) features a 'gun-firing' motive, which is a series of chords (G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5) with a 'chiaro' marking above the first bar. The left hand (bass clef) features a bass line with a '8vb' marking below the first bar. The score is marked with 'pp' (pianissimo) in both hands.

Example 14: Finzi’s *Channel Firing*. These three introductory bars represent a ‘gun-firing’ motive

Indeed, with *Channel Firing* Hardy has brought out some of the best in Finzi, Hold notes:

²²⁴ Burton B. Parker, “Textual-Musical Relationships in Selected Songs of Gerald Finzi,” *The NATS Bulletin* (May/June 1973): 18.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Hold, 410.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Hold, 410.

The result is one of his most original songs, at once frightening and, in its black humor, wryly amusing.²³¹

Form, or the lack thereof, is somewhat of an interesting topic in this piece. With the exception of the ritornello, which, as Banfield notes, “provides the only formal certainty... in the whole song,” form is illusive in *Channel Firing*²³² Banfield notes:

Finzi plays with form...his teasingly incomplete, layered musical sections and interrelationships matching Hardy’s blasphemous theology.²³³

Trevor Hold notes that there is “a marshmallow center to Finzi’s music that does not match Hardy’s bleak, granite-like vision.”²³⁴ Especially evident in *Channel Firing* is an inconsistency in Finzi’s ability to capture the sophistication of Hardy’s true sentiment. Although “Finzi mirrors Hardy’s metric patterns and melodic patterns impeccably”²³⁵ notes Hold, “he often fails to reach the inner heart of the poems.”²³⁶ Compared to those of Hardy, Finzi’s resources are “extremely narrow and restricted.”²³⁷ Perhaps most poignant regarding Finzi’s treatment of Hardy’s poetry is Hold’s comment that Finzi “irons out the irony.”²³⁸ In attempt to further clarify his point, Hold notes that although Finzi captures the melancholy of Hardy’s work, he misses the “bitterness.”²³⁹

Banfield elaborates on some of the same points made by Hold. Providing us with the phrase ‘It will be warmer when *I* blow the trumpet,’ Banfield makes the claim that Finzi

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Stephen Banfield. *Gerald Finzi: An English Composer*, 289.

²³⁴ Hold, 414.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

is guilty on the count of “failing to provide the proper accentuation”²⁴⁰ because his setting does not recognize the divinity of the speaker (Example 15).

The image shows a musical score for three measures (42, 43, 44) in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom two staves are the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "It will be warm-mer when I blow the trum- pet...". The piano part has dynamic markings *ff*, *fff*, and *mp subito*. There are accents (^) over the notes for "mer" and "pet".

Example 15: Finzi’s *Channel Firing*. In m.42, Finzi uses an ascending third to emphasize the word “warmer”. Banfield argues that the word “I” ought to be the emphasized syllable, since “I” is God in this case.

He also notes that Finzi “does not really grasp the narrative voices with the dramatic characterization of colour, pace and tessitura that they demand.”²⁴¹ Hold notes that Hubert Parry’s influence on Finzi later in his career particularly manifested itself in the composer’s “detailed attention to choice of poetry and meticulous scansion and word-setting.”²⁴² *Earth and Air and Rain* was written in the middle of Finzi’s career, whereas many of the songs in *Before and After Summer* were written towards the end of Finzi’s career. Finzi’s career spanned from 1920 to 1954. Although it is speculation, one can see Parry’s possible influence manifesting itself in Finzi’s *Channel Firing* which he wrote in 1940. Finzi’s obsession with Parry’s declamatory style of “one syllable-per note” word-setting is evident both in the recitative and arioso portions of the piece.

²⁴⁰ Stephen Banfield. *Gerald Finzi: An English Composer*, 289.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 290.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

Ireland's Establishment of a British Technique and Finzi's "Eclectically British" Approach

"What...distinguished lyricism in song after 1918 from its earlier manifestations?"²⁴³ asks Stephen Banfield. To this question he provides a simple, one word answer: "technique." Composers like Ireland, Quilter, and Vaughn Williams, Banfield notes, "had learnt to find their voice through setting poetry to music."²⁴⁴ Subsequently, this rise in song writing supplied examples of a well-polished technique and "built up a reserve of style for others to draw on."²⁴⁵ Because of his unique place in the timeline of British songwriting, Finzi had an advantage that Ireland did not. There was no need for his search to be cosmopolitan in scope. He had the opportunity to look solely upon British models. Regarding Finzi's compositional "Englishness" Hold writes:

His music is unashamedly in an English tradition; contemporary continental models are almost entirely absent and one can not detect Wagner, Strauss or Debussy influences as one can in the music of Elgar, Delius, Bridge, or Bax.²⁴⁶

Finzi's influences include names of composers who came from the generation after Elgar, Delius, Bridge, and Bax. That being said, did Finzi "draw on" any of Ireland's techniques? Trevor Hold does not include Ireland amongst Finzi's influences which he lists as being: Vaughn Williams, Holst, Butterworth, Gurney, and later in Finzi's career, Parry. Indeed, the song material of these composers is a generation or two removed from "continental models" and is distinguishable as English Art song. Since both Finzi and Ireland have been dubbed "English," can we find anything stylistically similar in their settings of Hardy's poems? How do their compositional choices compare? Attention to settings like *Summer Schemes*, *The*

²⁴³ Stephen Banfield. *Sensibility*, 160.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Hold, 395.

tragedy of that moment, Beckon to me to come, Dear, think not that they will forget you and *Weathers* by John Ireland when presented as a stylistic comparative to the aforementioned Finzi settings reveal answers to these questions.

Additional Settings of Hardy's Poetry by John Ireland

• Song: *Beckon to me to come* (Ireland)

Song set of origin: *Five poems by Thomas Hardy*

Poem serving as source of lyrics: *Lover to mistress*

Poem's collection of origin: *Human Shows*

Hardy's fatalistic attitude is not apparent in this poem. Music historian Michael Pilkington, in his book *Gurney, Ireland, Quilter and Warlock* notes that the general theme which Hardy's protagonist is declaring in this poem can be summarized: "one sign would bring me to you, whatever the difficulty."²⁴⁷ Within the context of the poem, reference is made to "two fields, a wood, and a tree" (Appendix A, Text E). Pilkington notes that the poem might be in reference to Tryphena Sparks, a woman that Hardy was in love with before he met his wife. Pilkington writes that "Between her house and his there were two fields, a wood and several lone trees."²⁴⁸

Ireland's setting of the Hardy poem *Lover to mistress* is entitled *Beckon to me to come*. The piece is written in through-composed form.²⁴⁹ It is interesting to note that both Ireland and Finzi find motifs to be a particularly helpful tool in setting Hardy's poetry. In the case of *Beckon to me to come*, similar to Finzi's use of the "gunfire" motif used at the beginning his *Channel Firing*, there is a "beckoning"²⁵⁰ motif that starts this piece and is also present at its

²⁴⁷ Michael Pilkington, *Gurney, Ireland, Quilter and Warlock* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 58.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Hold, 205.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

conclusion. Pilkington notes that this “beckoning” motif, which is used as a sort of ritornello, is that of a “fluttering handkerchief”²⁵¹ (Example 16).



Example 16: Ireland’s *Beckon to me to come*, the ‘beckoning’ motif.

Although the melody of *Beckon to me* appears to be in small sections separated by rests, its musical sections are sequenced together by a steady rise in the melodic line and via the rhythmic interest of its accompaniment. The piano propels the piece forward through its sections of rest in the vocal line. Ireland’s melodic lines, and likewise Hardy’s poetic interests, are sustained throughout several piano interludes in this fashion²⁵² (Example 17).



Example 17: Ireland’s *Beckon to me to come*: piano propels the piece forward in brief sections of rests in the vocal line.

²⁵¹ Pilkington, 58.

²⁵² Hold, 205.

On the other hand, Finzi's melodies, in songs like *Summer Schemes*, *The Phantom*, *The Clock of the Years*, and *Channel Firing* sustain themselves only within incomplete musical sections, a compositional technique Banfield refers to as "patchwork."²⁵³ Although the "chunking" style of Finzi's phrasing is somewhat akin to the way in which Hardy approached his poetry, Finzi's compositional approach seldom addresses unity amongst the component parts of a piece. Finzi's songs lack the certain sense of wholeness present in *Beckon to me to come* and several other of Ireland's Hardy settings.

• **Song: *The tragedy of that moment* (Ireland)**

Song set of origin: *Five poems by Thomas Hardy*

Poem serving as source of lyrics: *That moment*

Poem's collection of origin: *Human Shows*

That moment is an excellent example of one of Hardy's poems that, as mentioned in chapter two, "resists interpretation." As previously mentioned by literary scholar Samuel Hynes, Hardy felt he was his own audience. At times, the poet was selfishly unsympathetic to his audience. Without knowledge of the circumstances leading up to the particular "moment" to which Hardy is referring, we are left to our own inferences. Needless to say, the poet's compulsion to capture moments of time manifests itself in this piece whose very namesake professes his intentions. Regarding the *tragedy* as mentioned in the initial line of the poem, one must take into perspective that no matter the nature of the circumstances that lead up to the composition of this poem, Hardy "saw tragedy as a constituent of ordinary existence and not as a quality of noble and dramatic lives."²⁵⁴

Michael Pilkington lists the subject of this poem as being "When I came in and you spoke to me I was overwhelmed by sorrow." Pilkington denotes *That moment* as a "strange

²⁵³ Banfield, *Sensibility*, 287.

²⁵⁴ Hynes, Samuel, *Introduction*. In *Thomas Hardy: Selected Poetry*. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1994) xx.

poem,”²⁵⁵ and adds some biographical information which, if it is indeed true, may link this “tragic moment” to the jealousy felt by Emma, Hardy’s wife. Pilkinton writes: “many commentators seem to feel it refers to Emma’s jealousy of Mrs. Henniker.”²⁵⁶ Mrs. Henniker was a married woman in her late thirties that Hardy and his wife met on a trip to Dublin. In his book *Thomas Hardy a Biography Revisited*, Michael Millgate notes of Mrs. Henniker:

though not exactly a beauty, she was handsome assured, and elegantly dressed- in sharp contrast to Emma, who is said to have appeared in Dublin in an outfit of muslin and blue ribbons ludicrously inappropriate to her fifty-one years.²⁵⁷

Millgate adds that Hardy’s attraction to Mrs. Henniker was immediate and powerful.

John Ireland’s setting of *That moment* entitled *The tragedy of that moment* is the fourth song in his cycle *Five Poems by Thomas Hardy*. The piece is written in through-composed form.²⁵⁸ The song begins with “a slow and intense recit”²⁵⁹ (Example 18).

In order to portray tragedy, Ireland uses very low notes contained within what Pilkington describes as a “congested harmony.” He also notes that the piece concludes with a “drum-roll” (Example 19). He speculates that the drumroll could be that of a funeral. But whose funeral, was Ireland referring to, was it that of Hardy’s wife, Emma? Pilkington suggests that the woman (to which this poem is directed) is dying, but does not know it, whereas the singer does²⁶⁰ (Appendix A, Text F). Pilkington’s interpretive suggestion gives us a clearer perception of what is meant by Hardy’s phrase: “Yes, that which I seeing, but knew that you were not.”

²⁵⁵ Pilkington, 59.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Michael Millgate, *Thomas Hardy. A Biography Revisited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 308.

²⁵⁸ Hold, 205.

²⁵⁹ Pilkington, 59.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

The image shows a musical score for the first eight measures of the song 'The tragedy of that moment'. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a 2/2 time signature and features a slow recitative style with a melodic line that is mostly flat. The piano accompaniment is in the same time signature and features low, 'congested' harmonies with a slow, steady rhythm. The piano part is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The lyrics are: 'The tra - ge - dy of that mo - ment Was deep - er than the sea,'.

Example 18: Ireland’s *The tragedy of that moment*: a slow recitative with ominous low notes and “congested”²⁶¹ harmonies.

The image shows a musical score for the piano accompaniment of the final three measures of the song 'The tragedy of that moment'. The piano part is in a 2/2 time signature and features a 'drumroll' motif. The piano part is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic in measure 23 and a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic in measure 24. The lyrics are: 'The tra - ge - dy of that mo - ment Was deep - er than the sea,'.

Example 19: Ireland’s *The tragedy of that moment*: The “drumroll” motif from the conclusion of the piece.

Regarding Ireland’s harmonic technique, Carol Kimball notes that “More than melody, it is Ireland’s harmonic style that gives the text its clearest voice.”²⁶² This is clearly evident in *The tragedy of that moment*, a song where the melody is no more than a non-tuneful succession of pitches that relies on its harmonies to bring expression to its words. The harmonies of Ireland, writes Kimball, have the effect of “underscoring and intensifying moods and images within the verse.”²⁶³ Ireland uses harmony in a non-functional way, a

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Style & Literature* (Seattle: Pst...Inc., 1996), 319.

²⁶³ Ibid.

skill which he may have learned from studying the works of Ravel. Regarding Ireland's innovative use of chromaticism, Kimball remarks:

He embellishes harmonies with chromaticism
in a distinctive way, a way that is lyrical in its
own right.²⁶⁴

Comparatively, Finzi's harmony is more contrapuntal, almost fugal at times. In this regard, Banfield goes as far as to suggest an influence of Bach in Finzi's music, he writes:

Bach shows through often more clearly than
influences from intervening periods...²⁶⁵

Finzi's approach to harmony, Banfield adds, was "in many ways ultra conservative"²⁶⁶ and a "backwash of watery modality"²⁶⁷ rather than one that utilized a functional model. A downside to Finzi's contrapuntal approach, Banfield notes, was a weak harmonic structure, he writes:

He (Finzi) wrote such contrapuntal passages all too
Easily, often at the price of weak harmony.²⁶⁸

• **Song: *Dear, think not that they will forget you (Ireland)***

Song set of origin: *Five poems by Thomas Hardy*

Poem serving as source of lyrics: *Her temple*

Poem's collection of origin: *Late Lyrics and Earlier*

In Hardy's poem entitled *Her Temple*, Pilkington explains the subject as being: "I will build you such a shrine as all men will wonder at it, and you will be remembered, though I shall not."²⁶⁹ Pilkington notes that "the poem probably referred to Emma, and the 'Poems of 1912-13' which Hardy wrote immediately after her death."²⁷⁰

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Banfield, *Sensibility*, 280.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Pilkington, 59.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

Ireland's setting of *Her Temple* is entitled *Dear, think not that they will forget you*. The song is the fifth and final song in Ireland's cycle entitled *Five poems by Thomas Hardy*. The piece is written in through-composed form.²⁷¹ Pilkington notes that the opening of the song "refers back to the first bars of the cycle."²⁷² Indeed we see once again, although in a slightly embellished state, the return of the "fluttering handkerchief"²⁷³ motif. This motif was present at the beginning and end of *Beckon to me to come* and is here included within the piano introduction to *Dear, think not that they will forget you* (Example 20).



Example 20: Ireland's *Dear, think not that they will forget you*. this piano introduction marks the return within *Five poems by Thomas Hardy* of the 'beckoning' motif from the cycle's first song, *Beckon to me to come*.

Regarding, *Five poems by Thomas Hardy* Pilkington notes, "there is a musical connection between the first and last."²⁷⁴ It is the manner in which all the songs in this set seem to be "describing the singer's relationship with a particular woman over a period of years"²⁷⁵ that makes this collection, as Pilkington points out, "a genuine cycle."²⁷⁶ It seems as though Ireland had little difficulty finding Hardy poems that contained a common theme which he could group into a cycle. Finzi, on the other hand, exercised much caution in this regard, preferring not to create song cycles per se of Hardy's poems. Regarding Finzi's three

²⁷¹ Hold, 205.

²⁷² Pilkington, 59.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 57.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

major Hardy song sets, Banfield notes: Finzi “did not wish the three major song sets to be regarded as cycles.”²⁷⁷ Banfield notes furthermore that by “publishing the songs together,”²⁷⁸ Finzi claimed to be “lessening the chances of a single song’s being overlooked.”²⁷⁹ Regarding the issue of a lack of song grouping in Finzi’s Hardy settings, Banfield defends Finzi’s position saying:

Admittedly there are no stories running through them, and the principle of variety is more important than unity, but there is at least good evidence of their having been built up with extreme care.²⁸⁰

In the setting *Dear, think not that they will forget you* it is clearly evident that Ireland is every bit as insistent as Finzi in maintaining the text-setting ideal “for every syllable a note.” Just as Finzi holds fast to his allegiance to Hardy by expressing every idiosyncrasy of his poetry (see for example *The Clock of the Years*), so too does Ireland make every effort to similarly support Hardy’s poetry in *Dear, think not that they will forget you*. The first stanza, Pilkington notes, “is strong, as befits the building of a temple.”²⁸¹ Continuing to support the intricacy of the Hardy’s emotional roller coaster, Ireland next supports the singer’s second state of emotions of unfulfilled longing. Pilkington describes this second state as being “loving, wistful, accepting the singer was never of importance in her life in the way she has been in his.”²⁸²

In order to set this poem, whose prosody creates ever-changing rhythmic patterns, Ireland was dynamic in his metrical decisions. Similar to Finzi in the *Clock of the Years*, Ireland proves in this piece his ability to shift meter in order to accommodate Hardy’s

²⁷⁷ Banfield, *Sensibility*, 290.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁸¹ Pilkington, 27.

²⁸² *Ibid.*

dynamic prosodic shifts. Within the twenty-four bars of this piece, Ireland changes meter six times. Regarding the ideas pertaining to metrical text-setting between Ireland, Finzi, and other English composers of the early 20th century, Carol Kimball notes:

Like other English composers in the early 20th century, Ireland adopted a text-orientated style of composition, with a primarily syllabic approach to word-setting. He generally let the natural form and meter of the verse determine the shape and rhythm of the melody.²⁸³

• **Song: *Weathers* (Ireland)**

Song set of origin: *Three songs to poems by Thomas Hardy*

Poem serving as source of lyrics: *Weathers*

Poem's collection of origin: *Late Lyrics and Earlier*

Weathers is a very popular poem within Hardy's anthology. Perhaps it is its seemingly light-hearted nature that gives it a popular appeal. However, if we look at how the poem fits into the poet's philosophy on a whole, the sunshine that is characteristic of Hardy's first verse soon fades to black in the second verse, a description of the weather that ought to be "shunned." Ultimately, *Weathers* simply echoes Hardy's sentiment on nature's two distinctly different personalities: both beauty and beast.

Ireland's song based on Hardy's *Weathers* bears the same name as the poem and is contained within his song set entitled *Three songs to poems by Thomas Hardy*. This grouping of songs is a set and not a cycle. Finzi's *Weathers* is a strophic setting containing two verses. The first, Trevor Hold writes, is a "spring-like verse in the major."²⁸⁴ The second verse, by contrast, is "a wintry verse in the minor." Both verses, notes Hold, are written "with ambiguous minor cadences in the piano righted by the singer's 'And so do I'"²⁸⁵ (Examples 21 and 22). Similar in one respect to Finzi's *The Phantom*, Ireland sets the short chunks of

²⁸³ Kimball, 319.

²⁸⁴ Hold, 204.

²⁸⁵ Hold, 204.

Hardy's poetry into short, tuneful motives. Unlike Finzi's motives which seem to be unrelated, incomplete islands of melodic material, Ireland's short motives are offered up as antecedent and consequent musical ideas separated by short piano interludes.

19 20 21
 And cit-i-zens dream of the south and west,
 22 23 24
 And so do I.

mf *dim.*

Example 21: Ireland's *Weathers*: Note the momentary, ambiguous minor cadences in m. 21 which eventually morph into a reassuring major at m.24.

44 45 46
 And rooks in fam-il-ies home-ward go,

Example 22: Ireland's *Weathers*: Note the return of previously mentioned momentary, ambiguous minor cadences.

Conclusion: Two Stylistic Approaches to Hardy's Poetry

John Ireland, together with composers like Vaughn Williams and Quilter, enjoyed “a new confidence in technique...a technique which was not a major stumbling block.”²⁸⁶ What were the stumbling blocks to composers prior to Ireland? Banfield notes that English composers since the time of Purcell struggled with problems of word-setting, problems that were apparently inherent within the confines of the English ballad. Banfield notes that Ireland was “conscious of framing his chosen poetry in music of excellent workmanship” and he adds “gone were the old problems of word-setting, and gone were all but the last picked bones of the ballad.” Ireland, twenty years Finzi's senior, blazed a trail for composers of Finzi's generation by creating a “reserve of style for others to draw on.”²⁸⁷ Gerald Finzi, on the other hand, enjoyed an opportunity not afforded to Ireland- the opportunity to draw upon the techniques and compositional ideals of a handful of excellent composers who had already worked diligently to create a distinctive style of English art song.

Both differences and similarities exist in the styles of Gerald Finzi and John Ireland and this fact becomes increasingly evident when we examine their approaches to Hardy's poetry. It is interesting to note that both composers chose to use musical symbols of some type in order to portray the character of Hardy's poetry. More specifically, both composers are effective in their use of symbols to capture a specific “moment” in Hardy's poetry. There are differences, however in the methods each uses to employ their symbols. Ireland's musical symbols are harmonic (as in *Summer Schemes*) and he uses five “stock” symbols throughout the entire body of his repertoire to represent different affectations. Finzi uses motifs which are usually melodic. Some of Ireland's compositional ideals are cosmopolitan and he is indeed influenced by Ravel and Debussy in his use of non-functional, chordal

²⁸⁶ Banfield, *Sensibility*, 160.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

harmonies to evoke mood. Ireland's harmonic approach, though chordal, is "embellished with chromaticism," making it "lyrical in its own right." Rather than using a chordal approach, Finzi also approaches harmony in a non-functional manner, achieving lyricism in his harmonic writing by utilizing contrapuntal writing, weaving thematic material throughout different voices in a way that almost resembles Bach. In Finzi's settings of Hardy we see an imitative relationship between the voice and the piano including much "skillful interaction"²⁸⁸ written by the composer between voice and piano. Ireland's Hardy settings contain less imitation between voice and piano. Instead, Ireland provides in his piano lines beautifully shaped lines "to match the expressiveness of the poem."²⁸⁹ Ireland's melodies within a single song contain between them a certain degree of cohesion. Finzi's Hardy settings contain several short melodies within a single song that are patched together having little if any cohesiveness. Whereas Ireland uses chromatic embellishments to create lyricism in his chordal harmonies, Finzi uses chromatic tones for dissonance and uses them in a way that is "skillfully integrated into the texture for effect."²⁹⁰

When taking on the task of setting Hardy's poetry, Trevor Hold notes that Ireland is "able to match the bleak fatalism of the poet."²⁹¹ On the other hand, when approaching the same task, Hold writes, Finzi is unable to "reach the inner heart of the poems."²⁹² Regardless of the comments from their critics, a willingness on the part of each composer to set some of Hardy's most anti-lyrical poetry illustrates a high degree of courageousness and an ambition unmatched by their peers. A look into the lives of each composer gives a strong testimony of the bleak childhoods endured by each man. Perhaps the deep identification

²⁸⁸ Kimball, 332.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 319.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 319.

²⁹¹ Hold, 212.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 414.

that each composer shared with the poet drove them into their Hardian pursuits. Whatever the reason for his pursuit, the body of repertoire representing a renaissance in English song repertoire is all the richer because of their efforts.

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APPENDIX A
TEXTUAL EXAMPLES

Text A
Stanza I
Summer schemes
(by Thomas Hardy)

<p>When friendly summer calls again, Calls again</p> <p>Her little fifers to these hills, We'll go – we two – to that arched fane Of leafage where they prime their bills Before they start to flood the plain With quavers, minims, shakes and trills.</p>

Thesis

<p>-‘We’ll go,’ I said; but who shall say What may not chance before that</p>

Antithesis

Text B
Stanza I
Summer Schemes
(by Thomas Hardy)

<p>When friendly summer calls again, *Calls again</p>

Refrain

Her little fifers to these hills,
We'll go – we two – to that arched fane
Of leafage where they prime their bills
Before they start to flood the plain
With quavers, minims, shakes and trills.

Verse

<p>*-‘We’ll go,’ I said; but who shall say What may not chance before that day!</p>

Refrain

* Finzi uses descending fourths to designate these poetic refrains.

Text C

Stanza I (portion)
Weathers
(by Thomas Hardy)

And the little brown nightingale bills* his best,
And they sit outside at 'The Travelers Rest,'

*bills= sings.²⁹³

Stanza II (portion)
Weathers
(by Thomas Hardy)

And hill-hid tides* throb throe and throe
And meadow rivulets overflow.

*hill-hid tides= the sea, beyond the hills.²⁹⁴

Text D

Stanza I
The Phantom Horsewoman
(by Thomas Hardy)

Queer are the ways of a man I know
He comes and stands
In a careworn craze,
And looks at the sands
And the seaward haze
With moveless hands
And face and gaze,
Then turns to go...
And what does he see when he gazes so?

Text E

Stanza II
Lover to mistress
(by Thomas Hardy)

Two fields, a wood, a tree,
Nothing now more malign
Lies between you and me;
But were they bysm, or bluff,
Or snarling sea, one sign
 would be enough
 Maid mine,
Would be enough!

Text F

Stanza II
That moment
(by Thomas Hardy)

What I could not help seeing
 Covered life as a blot;
Yes, that which I was seeing,
 And knew that you were not!

²⁹³ Michael Pilkington, *Gurney, Ireland, Quilter and Warlock* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 60.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

APPENDIX B
A COMPLETE LIST OF HARDY SETTINGS BY GERALD FINZI AND
JOHN IRELAND FOR VOICE AND PIANO

Hardy Settings by Gerald Finzi for Voice and Piano

Earth and Air and Rain op 15

Summer Schemes
When I set out for Lyonesse
Waiting Both (1929)
The Phantom (1932)
So I have fared (1928)
Rollicum-rorum
To Lizbie Browne
The Clock of the Years
In a Churchyard (1932)
Proud Songsters (1929)

Till Earth Outwears op 19a

Let me enjoy the earth before (1936)
In years defaced (1936)
The Market-Girl (1927, revised 1940)
I look into my glass (1937)
It never looks like summer here 1956
At a lunar eclipse (1929, revised 1941)
Life laughs onward 1955

I Said to Love op 19b

I need not go before 1936 [1'34]
At Middle-Field Gate in February 1956 [3'25]
Two Lips 1928 [0'50]
In five-score summers 1956 [1'36]
For life I had never cared greatly [2'07]
I said to Love 1956 [3'01]

A Young Man's Exhortation op 14

A Young Man's Exhortation (1926)
Ditty (1925)
Budmouth Dears (1929)
Her Temple (1927)
The Comet at Yell'ham (1927)
Shortening Days (1928)
The Sigh (1928)
Former Beauties (1927)
Transformations (1929)
The Dance Continued

Hardy Settings by Gerald Finzi for Voice and Piano (cont.)

Before and After Summer op 16

Childhood among the ferns (1947)
Before and after summer
The Self-Unseeing 1949
Overlooking the River before 1940
Channel Firing 1940
In the Mind's Eye
The Too Short Time (1949)
Epeisodia
Amabel (1932)
He abjures love (1931)

Hardy Settings by John Ireland for Voice and Piano

Five Poems by Thomas Hardy

Beckon to me to come
In my sage moments
It was what you bore with you, woman
The tragedy of that moment
Dear, think not that they will forget you (Her Temple)

Three Songs to Poems by Thomas Hardy

Summer Schemes
Her Song
Weathers

Works (Songs) Published Separately

Great Things

APPENDIX C
A SELECT DISCOGRAPHY OF SONGS BY JOHN IRELAND AND
GERALD FINZI

Songs of Gerald Finzi

Before and After Summer

Stephen Varcoe/Clifford Benson
Hyperion CDA66161

Dies natalis

William Brown/English Chamber Orchestra/Christopher Finzi
EMI CDM7 63372

Earth and Air and Rain

Stephen Varcoe/Clifford Benson
Hyperion CDA66161

I Said to Love

Stephen Varcoe/Clifford Benson
Hyperion CDA66161

Let Us Garlands Bring

Stephen Varcoe/City of London Sinfonia/Richard Hickox
Chandos CHAN 8743

Oh Fair to See

Ian Partridge/Clifford Benson
Hyperion CDA66015

Till Earth Outwears

Martyn Hill/Clifford Benson
Hyperion CDA66161

To a Poet

Stephen Roberts/Clifford Benson
Hyperion CDA66015

A Young Man's Exhortation

Martyn Hill/Clifford Benson
Hyperion CDA66161

Songs of John Ireland for Voice and Piano

The complete songs of Ireland are available on The Hyperion Label and Tracks are performed by various artists including: Lisa Milne, John Mark Ainsley, Christopher Maltman, and Graham Johnson. Below are each of Ireland's songs listed next to most titles is the poet's name that authored the words. Hyperion: CDA67261/2

Songs Sacred and Profane

The Advent (Alice Meynell)
Hymn for a Child (Sylvia Townsend Warner)
My Fair (Alice Meynell)
The Salley Gardens (W B Yeats)
The Soldier's Return (Sylvia Townsend Warner)
The Scapegoat (Sylvia Townsend Warner)
Santa Chiara (Palm Sunday: Naples) (Arthur Symons)
Tryst (In Fountain Court) (Arthur Symons)

Three Songs (Arthur Symons)

The Adoration
The Rat
Rest

Two Songs

The Trellis (Aldous Huxley)
My true love hath my heart (Sir Philip Sidney)

Five Songs to Poems by Thomas Hardy

Beckon to me to come
In my sage moments
It was what you bore with you, woman
The tragedy of that moment
Dear, think not that they will forget you (Her Temple)

Three Songs to Poems by Thomas Hardy

Summer Schemes
Her Song
Weathers

Songs of a Wayfarer

Memory (William Blake)
When daffodils begin to peer (William Shakespeare)
English May (Dante Gabriel Rossetti)
I was not sorrowful (Spleen) (Ernest Dowson)
I will walk on the earth (James Vila Blake)
Ladslove (A E Housman)
The Heart's Desire (A E Housman)
When I am dead, my dearest (Christina Rossetti)
What art thou thinking of? (Christina Rossetti)
During Music (Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

Mother and Child (Christina Rossetti)

Newborn
The Only Child
Hope
Skylark and Nightingale
The Blind Boy
Baby
Death-parting
The Garland

Five XVIth-Century Poems

A Thanksgiving (William Cornish)
All in a garden green (Thomas Howell)
An Aside (anonymous)
A Report Song (Nicholas Breton)
The Sweet Season (Richard Edwardes)

Three Songs

Love and Friendship (Emily Brontë)
Friendship in Misfortune (anonymous)
The One Hope (Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

We'll To the Woods No Moore

We'll to the woods no more (A E Housman)
In Boyhood (A E Housman)
Spring will not wait (piano solo)
When lights go rolling round the sky (James Vila Blake)

Various Songs (published separately)

The Vagabond (John Masefield)
The Bells of San Marie (John Masefield)
Sea Fever (John Masefield)
The Journey (Ernest Blake)
Bed in Summer (Robert Louis Stevenson)
I have twelve oxen (anonymous, early English)
Great Things (Thomas Hardy)
Earth's Call (A Sylvan Rhapsody) (Harold Monro)
Hope the Hornblower (Sir Henry Newbolt)
The Sacred Flame (Mary Coleridge)
Remember (Mary Coleridge)
When I am old (Ernest Dowson)
Spleen (Ernest Dowson, after Paul Verlaine)
Love is a sickness full of woes (Samuel Daniel)
If there were dreams to sell (Thomas Lovell Beddoes)
If we must part (Ernest Dowson)
Tutto è sciolto (James Joyce)
Spring Sorrow (Rupert Brooke)

**APPENDIX D
PERMISSIONS**

BOOSEY & HAWKES

October 27, 2005

Mr. Richard Michael Jupin
3301 Northstar Road, Apt. 227
Richardson, TX 75082

Dear Mr. Jupin:

RE: EARTH AND AIR AND RAIN (Finzi)
BEFORE AND AFTER SUMMER (Finzi)

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BOOSEY & HAWKES, INC.



Frank Korach
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From : Peter Maxwell <peter.maxwell@cramermusic.co.uk> [Inbox](#)
 Sent : Monday, October 31, 2005 9:18 AM
 To : Richard Jupin <rjup@hotmail.com>
 Subject : Re: John Ireland-Permission-Copyright-URGENT

Thank you for your email.

Please accept this email as permission to use the examples as stated in your email from John Ireland's Weathers.

For information our address is:-

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 London
 WC2E 9RY

Regards

Peter Maxwell
 Managing Director

In message <BAY101-F1818F88F61B0385248B323D2680@phx.gbl>, Richard Jupin <rjup@hotmail.com> writes

Richard Michael Jupin
 3301 Northstar Rd.
 Apt #227
 Richardson, TX
 e-mail: rjup@hotmail.com

75082

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 99 St Martin's Lane,
 London
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Copyright Administrator,

My name is Richard Michael Jupin, I am a Doctoral Student. I am writing you for permission to include the musical examples listed below in the body of my Written Document Submitted to the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the School of Music. The title of my written document is Gerald Finzi and John Ireland:
 A Stylistic Comparison of Compositional Approaches in the Context of Ten

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27 October 2005

Ms. Nancy Savoy
o/b/o Mr. Richard Michael Jupin
3301 Northstar Road #227
Richardson, TX 75082

Dear Ms. Savoy:

Five Poems by Thomas Hardy

We now approve Mr. Jupin's request to reprint excerpts from the aforesaid song cycle in his doctoral dissertation in the College of Music at the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College. The acknowledgment

Five Poems by Thomas Hardy
John Ireland
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should appear therein. There will be no charge. Please write again if his dissertation is published.

Sincerely,

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VITA

Richard Jupin holds a Master of Music in vocal performance from The Boston Conservatory and a Bachelor of Music in music education from the Crane School of Music. Mr. Jupin, a baritone, has enjoyed solo engagements and opera roles in Boston, Syracuse, Baton Rouge, and Dallas. Aside from performing, Mr. Jupin has a strong commitment to teaching and vocal pedagogy. He has studied voice science extensively under Stephen Austin and has worked with vocal pedagogues Dale Moore, Richard Miller and Oren Brown. Mr. Jupin's interest in vocal pedagogy and teaching stem from his many years as a public school music educator.