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A Justification for the Study of Folk Song Settings, or the Arrangement as a Valid Composition

by

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores arrangements of British Isles folk song melodies as set by major composers: Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), and Benjamin Britten (1913-1976). These composers found vivid inspiration and a certain amount of success by setting folk songs as art music, but a survey of available scholarship centering on their works in most instances reveals only a superficial discussion of their folk song arrangements. Moreover, folk song studies, which tend to focus on the existence of melodies, their origins, and modern efforts in collection, also avoid the arrangements by serious composers. A few important studies exist which deal specifically with folk song arrangements, but by and large this area suffers from neglect. This is no doubt due to a misunderstanding of the term arrangement as it applies to the examples from the works of these composers, and its connotation as a composition of lesser value than wholly original works.

This paper explores the folk song arrangements by these four composers through a study of similar melodies from their collections, which altogether number more than eight hundred songs. A review of the historical context of these collections reveals the degree of importance they occupied in each composer’s overall output of works. Then an
analysis of one melody set three different ways by Vaughan Williams, as well as analytical comparisons of arrangements of seven other melodies set by pairs of these four composers demonstrates the various devises each used to bring originality, creativity, and musical artistry to a work despite the limitations proscribed by a preexisting melody.
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I wish to thank the following for their kind permission to reprint musical examples:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction 1

2. Historical Context for the Folk Song Arrangements 3
   of Ralph Vaughan Williams, Benjamin Britten,
   Ludwig van Beethoven, and Franz Joseph Haydn

3. Analysis of Specific Folk Song Arrangements
   3.1 Introduction 28
   3.2 Vaughan Williams: 30
       “Bushes and Briars”
   3.3 Vaughan Williams and Britten: 45
       “I Will Give My Love an Apple” and
       “She’s Like the Swallow”
   3.4 Britten and Beethoven: 53
       “Sally in our Alley” and
       “The Miller of Dee”
   3.5 Haydn and Beethoven: 65
       “Robin Adair”
   3.6 Haydn and Britten: 69
       “The Ash Grove” and
       “O Can Ye Sew Cushions”

4. Conclusion 79

Bibliography 86

Appendices 91
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Vaughan Williams's Folk Song Arrangements  
Appearing in Published Collections 91

Table 2: Chronological List of Publications of Individual Folk Songs  
for Ensemble Voices 93

Table 3: Vaughan Williams's Folk Songs Set for Mixed Voices,  
also Published as Solo Songs 95

Table 4: Folk Song Melodies Appearing only as Choral Settings 97

Table 5: Complete Alphabetical List of the Folk Song Arrangements  
by Vaughan Williams for Voices and their Publications,  
Including their Various Multiple Settings 99
A Justification for the Study of Folk Song Settings, or the Arrangement as a Valid Composition

1. INTRODUCTION

When comparing the scholarly literature of art music with that of folk music, it becomes clear that certain topics that might be assumed to fit into either one of these categories are actually treated satisfactorily by neither. In general, scholarly literature has overlooked topics that straddle the divide between art music and folk music. On the one hand, scholarship that focuses on art music tends to neglect the arrangements of folk melodies by serious composers; on the other hand, authors who have written on the development of folk music tend to overlook the fact that folk melodies served as the source for many works by serious composers. Some important studies exist which deal with folk song arrangements, but by and large this area suffers from neglect. Scholarship on both sides tends to ignore the reality that a large body of composers found vivid inspiration and a certain amount of success by setting folk songs as art music.

The reasons for this oversight are not hard to understand. The simplest explanation, and the most obvious, is that art music and folk music scholarship are both large fields of study, and a natural dividing line exists between them. Just as there is ample material to study in original compositions, there is substantial material to research on existing collections of folk song melodies. But other reasons certainly do exist, revealing biases in the scholarship of these individual areas. With their focus on "original" works, studies of art music tend to regard arrangements of preexisting melodies as inferior compositions. In so doing, this body of scholarship subtly promotes the notion that musical arrangements are not valid compositions. Similarly, serious collectors and scholars of folk melodies reject the composed body of folk song arrangements, holding to the opinion that these settings corrupt the purity of folk songs' origins and exploit their
use. They tend to promote the notion that folk music belongs to the common person, and incorporating these melodies into music for artistic consumption betrays its origins. Converting folk music into art music is akin to taking something pure and undefiled and corrupting it with artificial layers of expression and interpretation.

This neglect of folk song arrangements is reason enough to warrant their exploration. But such a study will also yield insight into the compositional process. Many significant composers have found inspiration from folk song melodies and have made arrangements of them. To overlook them is to ignore an important source of their inspiration in general and a significant portion of their compositional output.

The intent of this project is to explore a select number of the many arrangements of British Isles folk songs. A comparison of settings of the same or similar melodies by four major composers will reveal some of the compositional techniques and processes used to personalize the expression of a musical composition within the limitations imposed by a preexisting melody. This analysis will benefit from an exploration of the historical context of the important collections of British Isles folk song arrangements. Beginning with the founding of what is commonly known as the English Folk Song School near the turn of the twentieth century, it will explore the historical context of Ralph Vaughan Williams's (1872-1958) interaction with folk song melodies. Next it will examine the folk song arrangements of Benjamin Britten (1913-1976), an important figure in mid-twentieth century folk song settings. Finally, it will review folk song arrangements from the Classical era by two important Viennese composers, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) and Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) by way of comparison with twentieth-century models. The ways in which these composers made artistic settings of these otherwise common melodies will demonstrate the breadth of their compositional technique.
2. Historical Context for the Folk Song Arrangements of Ralph Vaughan Williams, Benjamin Britten, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Franz Joseph Haydn

During the decades preceding the end of the nineteenth century, as art music continued to be stretched away from its tonic center and musical paths veered away from diatonic harmony, some composers began to search for other means by which to organize musical material into new compositions. Two directions in musical composition become apparent: one moving towards greater complexity, another towards greater simplicity. There are notable exceptions to these generalities, but very often instrumental compositions were the vehicles for exploration beyond diatonic harmony, while works for voice(s) retained an element of harmonic familiarity.

One approach came about through the influence of Nationalism and the incorporation of traditional melodies and folk themes into musical compositions. As urbanization became the mainstay of the modern age, a desire to reconnect to an idealized notion of the rustic—the primitive and unsophisticated simplicity of the countryside—entered the artistic mindset. The collecting of folk song melodies and the incorporation of those melodies into art music provided one means of satisfying this desire. Indeed, this was not a new occurrence; composers had been incorporating folk or popular melodic material into their compositions for centuries. But it is clear that this era in particular inspired an increased interest in simplicity that propelled composers and others to embark upon the collection and preservation of folk melodies.

During the later half of the nineteenth century there began a movement to collect and preserve folk music. On the European continent, most major composers incorporated folk melodies into some of their compositions. Notable musical examples include Johannes Brahms's *Folkslieder* and the instrumental works of Antonín Dvořák. This is
now regarded by some scholars as the first revival in folk music. It was primarily motivated by individuals who were seeking to identify or create their own national musical language. In Great Britain, as well as in other non-Germanic countries, there was a desire to cultivate a musical language distinct from that of the Austro-German music that so heavily dominated the century. Many composers took part in folk song collecting, and those who did not relied heavily upon the collections of others. In either case, folk melodies became an important resource for creating new compositions.

In England, a significant collection of folk songs was published by John Broadwood (1798-1864) in 1843.\(^1\) Previously, only folk song texts had been printed, and this was the first collection of English folk song texts presented along with their melodies. The edition was reissued in 1890 by Broadwood's daughter, Lucy (1858-1929), who augmented her father's publication with songs from her own collection. Three years later she published her own additional volume.\(^2\) These collections, along with those of Frank Kidson and Sabine Baring-Gould, paved the way to the founding of the English Folk Song Society in 1898. Established in London by a group of musicians in order to direct the collection, preservation, and publication of English folk songs, the society published a journal, the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, in thirty-one volumes between 1899 and 1931. This constituted a major source of English folk song transcription and scholarship. Contributors included pioneers such as Lucy Broadwood, Anne Gilchrist, Percy Grainger, Maud Karpeles, Frank Kidson, E. J. Moeran, Cecil Sharp, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. The society merged with the English Folk Dance Society in 1931, becoming the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Ralph Vaughan Williams joined the society in 1904 and

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\(^1\) Broadwood's collection, titled *Old English songs, as now sung by the peasantry of the Wearld [sic] of Surrey and Sussex*, contained melodies arranged by G. Alexander Dusart. It has been reissued as part of *Sweet Sussex: Folk Songs from the Broadwood Collections* (Sutton Coldfield, UK: Ferret Publications, 1995).

later became its president, remaining in that capacity until his death in 1958. Its library collection was subsequently named in his honor.

During the decade before World War I the most notably zealous English folk song collector was Cecil Sharp. He held to the belief that folk music, the music produced by artisan and laboring rural people, had the power to purge and purify English popular culture of the commercial influences of the music hall and Tin Pan Alley. In a post-Darwinian manner Sharp proposed that continuity, variation, and selection were the three vital components of folk songs and that anonymous composition and oral transmission were defining elements. He focused his efforts on collecting songs that fulfilled these criteria, identifying melodies that were of rural and communal origin and untainted by popular music. Moreover, he was instrumental in introducing folk song into the curriculum of state schools, a process he saw as returning the culture to its rightful owners.

Sharp also published many editions of his own folk song collections as well as examples from the collections of others. Generally these song transcriptions were published in the same format as classical song, that is, as vocal scores with piano accompaniment. As such, they immediately became associated with music that was meant to be performed by trained singers and pianists, although the accompaniments themselves were not elaborate. Initially, this characteristic did not produce a fondness for these collections among trained musicians. That there existed a stigma against English folk music among the intelligentsia is revealed in the unlikely coincidence that though both Cecil Sharp and Ralph Vaughan Williams, independent of one another, began collecting folk music at nearly the same time, neither revealed this to the other until years later. Vaughan Williams found that his new enthusiasm for folk music “bored most of his
friends to death,” ³ and ironically felt that Cecil Sharp would be chief among those who would find it dull.

The circumstances which propelled Vaughan Williams and Sharp into a lifelong passion for folk music bear striking similarities, even in the timing of their occurrence. While staying at Hambridge in Somerset during the summer of 1903, Sharp heard his host’s gardener sing “The Seeds of Love,” a tune which appropriately started him on his life’s work of collecting the songs of England. Three months later Vaughan Williams had almost the same experience. For nearly a year he had been presenting university extension lectures on folk song. At the time he was familiar with the various late-century collections of published folk songs, among them the Broadwood publications (Lucy Broadwood, drawing on her own collections, even demonstrated examples for him in his lectures). In the autumn of 1903 Vaughan Williams was lecturing at Brentwood when he was invited to attend a tea for local elderly people, some of whom, he was told, might possibly know country songs. This event would provide an encounter that proved to be a turning point, both in his career as a composer, and in the preservation and subsequent revival of English folk song. He did meet some singers at the tea, and on the following day he notated twenty-two songs, seven of them from a seventy-year-old laborer, Mr. Charles Pottipher. The first song he sang was Bushes and Briars, at which Vaughan Williams experienced a deep sense of recognition, as though “he had known it all his life.” ⁴

Vaughan Williams was one of the first great composers to both collect and incorporate folk songs into his compositions in the early twentieth century. Indeed, folk


song melodies had an influence on his very musical language in all of his genres. Over the course of roughly a decade Vaughan Williams devoted a considerable amount of time and personal resources towards the collection of folk song melodies and texts, amassing over 800 songs. He devoted as many as thirty days a year to the activity, often over holidays, and in conjunction with visits to various friends in other parts of the country. Frequently he made excursions with a bicycle and notebook into areas such as Surrey and Sussex to collect songs. One of his more famous endeavors was a journey by train in 1905 to King’s Lynn where he obtained some thirty songs, including *The Captain’s Apprentice*, that would appear in many of his compositions. His method very often involved simply strolling into a public house and inquiring after local possible singers. Over the course of his collecting excursions he did not travel excessively far beyond Southeast and East Anglia, and stayed within close proximity to his successive homes in London and his mother’s home at Leith Hill Place. He seems to have been aware of other concurrent folk song collecting excursions being performed, and avoided the South counties as a result. He further avoided Devon and Cornwall, most certainly knowing that another collector, Baring-Gould, had extensively worked those areas, and that his friend, Cecil Sharp, was cultivating the county of Somerset.

The year 1904 was his most productive, with the notation of 234 songs, over a quarter of his entire collection. This work continued steadily for a few years, and then began to fall away. Vaughan Williams, along with the other collectors of his generation, was sensitive to the need to preserve melodies before they were forever lost. The tradition of preserving melodies was not firmly established, and collectors were acutely aware that as the older generation of singers began to pass on, so went the memory of folk songs. “By 1913 Vaughan Williams annual tally of songs declined to twenty-nine, and
this was more or less the end of his collecting. His work as a composer had gone rapidly forward, partly impelled and considerably influenced by folk song.”

Overall, Vaughan Williams fell under criticism in his collecting because he was more interested in the song than the singer, more in the melody than the message. Modern scholarship, perhaps, would wish to record every possibly item from a singer’s repertoire, together with any information, not only about how the songs were leaned, but also about various attitudes toward them, views on their meaning and function, and their place in the life of the singer.⁶ Often Vaughan Williams notated only melodies, the words of which are now lost. For example, in 1904 he took down sixteen tunes, none with words, from the Sussex “Meistersinger,” Henry Burnstow, who could boast a repertoire of 420 songs, all of which he was capable of singing over a series of evenings.⁷ In all, Vaughan Williams only took down 237 texts out of his collection of 810 songs, and many of these are limited to the first verse. His manuscripts refer to the tunes according to numbers, implying that the words were available through printed ballad sheets, now unavailable, and he did not find it necessary to reproduce them. With his notation of Young Henry the Poacher, he included the commentary “the complete words, which are of no great interest, are on a Such ballad sheet.”⁸ Often he only collected the first verse of a song, and in many cases omissions exist in the texts or in subsequent verses. This is no doubt due to the reality that he was recording in long hand, and it is reasonable to suspect that he was unable to keep up with his singers, or perhaps was unable to hear them clearly. He must have missed a good deal by way of individual turns of phrase, local

⁵ Palmer, x.
⁶ Palmer, xi.
⁷ Palmer, xiii.
⁸ Palmer, xiv.
vocabulary, and significant melodic variation. Certainly his record of many tunes is susceptible to his own filter of interpretation. He was attempting in many cases to note melody and variants; he was usually alone, although one notable excursion in 1911 took him on a short bicycle tour with fellow-composer George Butterworth, and together they transcribed songs simultaneously. Like Cecil Sharp, and unlike Bartok and Grainger, Vaughan Williams seemed not to be fond of the recording machine. In one instance a Mrs. Leather recorded songs on phonograph cylinders and asked him to notate the tunes for her, but otherwise he preferred the immediacy and unobtrusiveness of his notebook and pencil.

Vaughan Williams incorporated these folk song melodies in a variety of ways. His use of them in his instrumental compositions—a fertile area of scholarship—will not be discussed here. He believed that these melodies needed to be preserved in order to be sung, to be maintained in an oral tradition. His main reason for collecting, as with his contemporaries who went into the field gathering songs, was to preserve a part of his national heritage, which was otherwise dying away. There seemed to develop two thoughts on what kind of application was appropriate for these melodies. One camp of purists believed that the melodies must be preserved for solo singing, preferably without accompaniment, so that the tunes would continue to survive in the manner in which they were originally created and enjoyed in rural society. Another camp saw that a way to honor the melodies' existence was to incorporate them into musical adaptations or arrangements, either as vocal solos with embellished accompaniments, or as part songs for groups of voices. With added material that may not have been contained in the original melodic line, these applications became more like original compositions, bearing a composer's own imprint through the supplied harmonies, textures, and rhythmic figures in accompanying voices or instruments (most often keyboard). In most settings the
original tune serves as the most prominent voice, but the composed material reveals much about the composer’s identity and artistic ideals.

The folk song arrangements by Vaughan Williams are worthy of study because they span all varieties of these types of settings. He seemed to occupy a position between both camps. In honoring the purists he supplied melodies with only supplemental harmonies so that they could be performed as solo songs or with simple piano accompaniments. He also pursued artistic settings, which gave prominence to the composed material—although these never overshadowed the original melody—and added his own compositional interpretation. These settings include both solo songs with piano accompaniment and part songs for various combinations of voices, with or without instrumental accompaniment.

Vaughan Williams’s folk song settings appeared in various collections as well as in individual publications. In all, he arranged roughly one hundred folk song melodies in one form or other, with individual melodies sometimes appearing in multiple versions. His eighty arrangements for solo voice with piano accompaniment appeared in seven unique published collections between 1908 and 1935; nine settings of melodies from the Appalachian Mountains which he composed in 1938 as a gift to Maud Karpeles were finally published nine years after his death. Two more editions containing melodies he had collected were also published posthumously. Significantly, the first song that appears in his initial published collection in 1908 is an arrangement of “Bushes and Briars.”

Generally speaking, the material used in crafting these solo-voice arrangements comes directly from the melodies. Not only is the particular mode of the melody imitated in harmonic choices presented in the accompaniments, but the very mood of the piece comes from the melody and the text. His rhythmic treatment of the accompaniments also
reflects the text. Staccato chords accompany boisterous, energetic melodies and texts; plaintive or reflective melodies and texts feature legato, flowing, arpeggiated lines. The text also serves to supply the structure. All of these settings feature multiple verses, and Vaughan Williams takes great care to present enough variety to enhance the various changes of mood between them. Some settings are written out entirely, others are presented strophically, in which case he typically supplies brief introductions and postludes that combine to form bridge material between the verses. He took more liberty with some of his arrangements than others, and this usually reflects his intended performers and audience. His first collection bears accompaniments that resemble some of his other songs for voice and piano composed during the same period, elevating these folk songs into the realm of art song. His second publication, *Folk Songs for Schools* in 1912, takes a step back and presents melodies with much simpler accompaniments, reflecting their intended use in the curriculum of public school music education.

Beyond the more obvious applications of some of these songs, little else is known about the specific purposes, if any, behind the arrangements of these melodies. So far very little has come to light from the original source material. His various biographers, including Ursula Vaughan Williams, make little mention of these compositions, an oversight which in some cases seems to reflect the unfortunate opinion that these folk song arrangements are not considered as artistically worthy as his other compositions. It is clear that they were set so that they could be performed publicly, but none seem to be composed with a particular performer in mind. Perhaps these arrangements for solo voices were merely Vaughan Williams's personal contribution to a fading element of England's rural cultural heritage, an homage to a dying art. But it is significant that he found inspiration through his work with these melodies. It certainly was not an effort intended to bring monetary gain, for even though they succeeded in achieving initial
publication, the settings have otherwise fallen out of public recognition and in many instances have not remained in print.

His settings of folk song melodies for ensemble voices appeared usually as individual publications; one group of five songs arranged for mixed voices was published as a set in 1913. The same year his first collection for solo voice and piano accompaniment was published in 1908, Vaughan Williams arranged two folk song setting for male voices. Significantly, again, one of them was a setting of "Bushes and Briars." Vaughan Williams would continue to compose choral settings of the folk melodies he encountered; very often, as with "Bushes," they came about after being set for solo voice and piano. At other times, as with the other melody arranged for chorus in 1908, "The Jolly Ploughboy," they appeared first in this way, and were often later set again for solo voices.

Vaughan Williams made repeated use of these melodies. In all, there were roughly forty settings of folk melodies for vocal ensembles; twenty were for SATB mixed voices, with fourteen settings for men's voices. Most often these choral settings were intended for unaccompanied chorus; a few were set with orchestral accompaniments. One such example is his large-scale cantata *Folk Songs of the Four Seasons*, composed for the combined choirs of the Federation of Women's Institutes in 1949. This work is also his only composition of folk songs exclusively for women's voices. Ursula Vaughan Williams's account of the premiere reports Ralph's satisfaction at hearing these melodies sung by amateur, unrefined singers, just as when they were collected. Her record of his reaction to the performance and his pleasure at knowing that he had contributed

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significantly to the preservation of an otherwise dying art reveals once again his love affair with English folk song.\textsuperscript{10}

Like Vaughan Williams, other British composers set native folk song melodies for voices, and some were also collectors. Having known Cecil Sharp and Vaughan Williams during his studies at Oxford, George Butterworth (1885-1916) was also an active member of the English Folk Song Society, joining in 1906. In 1911 he was a founding member of the English Folk Dance Society. He made an important contribution to folk song settings with his publication of \textit{11 Folk Songs from Sussex} in 1912.

Another folk song collector who was also an arranger was Percy Grainger (1882-1961). The native Australian made his home in Britain beginning in 1901 and became swept up in the folk song movement. He was one of the earliest collectors to use the phonograph to record folk song melodies from the rural laborers who would sing them for him. This aspect, the perfectly preserved specimen, would greatly influence his manner of crafting melodies into artistic arrangements. Indeed, his settings reflect both dichotomies of purist collector and free artistic arranger. While he was meticulous and exacting in his preservation of the melody just as the singer sang it, he was conversely extremely free with his accompaniments. He strove for painful accuracy in transcribing the melody and gave extreme care to the details of the way it was originally sung by the singer. His densely annotated scores provide pronunciation guides approximating the dialect of the singer; he also reflects variations in otherwise strophic melodies with ossia

\textsuperscript{10} "The next concert excitement was the first performance of the \textit{Folk Songs of the Four Seasons} by the massed choirs of the Federation of Women's Institutes. The Albert Hall was packed, and when the choirs rose to their feet it was strange to find that the audience seemed far fewer than the performers—mostly not young, mostly not good-looking, all in their best clothes, so unlike the uniform black or white of the usual choir. When they started to sing there was a freshness and sweetness in their voices that matched the songs, and beautified the singers. The difficult unaccompanied three-part arrangement of "The Unquiet Grave" was the one Ralph liked the best of all, and we felt infinite gratitude because these tunes had been preserved and were not lost with the deaths of the singers from whom they had been collected." Ursula Vaughan Williams, \textit{RVW}, 299.
staves. He is meticulous in transcribing the exact rhythm of his singers, often making careful distinction between dotted-rhythms and triplets in similar passages, and employing changing meters in a meticulous effort to capture their rhythmic freedom and rubato. He even seems to attempt to capture slight inaccuracies or melodic variations in the singer’s pitch, utilizing accidentals inconsistently on different verses in similar melodic passages. Conversely, he employed broad freedom of artistic expression with his supplied accompaniments which show more creativity and exploration, with embellishments and commentary on the melodies and texts. And yet, despite what has been described as “a riot of harmony”\(^{11}\) with rich chromatic embellishment, he rarely strays far from the late Romantic harmonic idiom, and his settings can more or less be understood within the context of a key-centered tonality. Furthermore, notwithstanding his harmonic and rhythmic freedom, the essential dramatic conception and the contour of the original song were rarely altered by the accompaniment. He found a rich vocabulary of artistic expression within the seemingly confined framework of the supplied melody. A further example of his experimentation with artistic color is revealed in the optional use, in many of his settings, of a variety of instruments in addition to keyboard. Beyond the usual instruments from the brass, woodwind, and string families, he explores timbres through the less-familiar harmonium, reed-organ, concertina, and accordion.

There is a certain amount of evidence revealing that Benjamin Britten was heavily influenced by these Grainger settings in his own piano-vocal settings of British Isles folk melodies. Britten knew and respected Grainger’s works and was familiar with what had become the “older school” of folk song composers, specifically Vaughan Williams and Cecil Sharp. Writing in his pocket diary on 3 March 1933, he praised “two brilliant folk

song arrangements of Percy Grainger...knocking all the V. Williams and R.O. Morris arrangements into a cocked-hat." 12 Later, near the end of his life, demonstrating that his affinity for Grainger's works had not died, he conducted and recorded a *Salute to Percy Grainger* 13 which included various folk song settings. He further supervised another similar project when he was no longer able to conduct. 14 His admiration for the Grainger arrangements is said to have given him the confidence to make settings of his own, yet the two approached folk song arranging very differently. Where Grainger was obsessed with reproducing melodically on the page what he heard from his singers, Britten is distanced from the role of the collector-purist, and contributes settings that are more free, more like artistic inventions, more like art songs. Britten was not a collector; by the time he became interested in setting folk song melodies, the general attitude was that all the available melodies had been collected, even though some dedicated collectors continued to discover new songs beyond the postwar years. 15 Britten turned, rather, to the collections of others, and in this manner he remained a step further removed from the purists, avoided the shackles of the preservationists, and remained free to explore folk song settings as art songs. In this way his contributions are truly meant for the recitalists.

Published in seven volumes between 1943 and 2001 (the last two were posthumous publications), Britten's folk song arrangements were originally composed as encores to the concerts he and his lifelong partner and collaborator Peter Pears (1910-1986) gave at the end of their sojourn in the United States in 1941. The pair had spent


15 Significant post-war collectors included Douglas and Peter Kennedy, and A.L. Lloyd. See Johnson, 66.
nearly three years in Canada and the United States, during which time Britten had composed many works reflecting his surroundings, including a *Canadian Carnival* for orchestra, *An American Overture*, and the operetta *Paul Bunyan*. But for nearly six months toward the end of 1941 while he and Pears awaited passage home to England Britten experienced a profound depression, resulting in an almost total compositional block, a rare instance in his career. He suffered from acute homesickness, with anxiety about the state of the war, and worried about his family and friends in England. Perhaps to alleviate this unhappy state he turned to relatively straightforward tasks such as the first of his Purcell realizations and the settings of British Isles folk melodies. After his European works of the 1930s, including settings of Rimbaud (*Les Illuminations*) and Michelangelo (*Seven Sonnets*), and his American works of the early 1940s, he seemed to use the folk song settings as a catalyst to return to works of a purely British nature, which would later include the *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*, *Peter Grimes*, and *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne*.

In addition to his familiarity with the Grainger settings, Britten also knew of Vaughan Williams's folk song arrangements, though he was not fond of them. He frankly distanced himself from the folk song school of the early century, criticizing it for what he felt was its amateurishness as well as its exaggerated and aggressive patriotism in Nationalistic expression. Britten had met E. J. Moeran (1894-1950) soon after the latter had completed a collection of roughly 150 Norfolk songs, and despite Britten's further criticism, the two developed a warm friendship. His familiarity with Moeran's folk songs is demonstrated by his setting of "The Shooting of his Dear," the text and melody of which came from Moeran's *Six Folk Songs from Norfolk.*

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Whether or not he was fully aware of it, Britten began to establish his relationship with the evolving British musical folk song tradition during the American years. On the one hand, he expressed severe animosity towards it with his 1941 essay “England and the Folk-Art Problem.” He attacked the authenticity of folk song, and deemed composer's dependence on it for raw material as either unsatisfactory or the sign of a need for better discipline. The tunes themselves he found to possess a certain “quiet, uneventful charm,” but “seldom have any striking rhythms or memorable melodic features.” And yet, on the other hand, this disregard did not prevent him from making considerable use of these melodies as folk song arrangements throughout his life.

Upon returning to England in April of 1942 Britten and Pears were obliged to appear before a tribunal for conscientious objectors because of their desire to avoid being drafted into the war. The subsequent ruling stipulated that they perform concerts for both The Council for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) and War Relief. The folk song arrangements became an established part of their repertoire and are credited with winning over an audience that was otherwise hostile on account of the pair’s pacifism. Moreover, the popularity and broad appeal of the folk song arrangements played a significant role in establishing Britten’s music in general with a wider audience. The publication of the first volume of folk songs together with the appearance of the *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*, marked 1943 as a turning point in the acceptance of Britten’s music by the concert-going public of his native country.

Not all of the arrangements in these seven volumes are purely from folk song sources. The first song in volume one is Britten’s setting of “The Salley Gardens,” which is part folk song, part art song. The text, written by the Irish poet William Butler Yeats, (1865-1939), was joined to a folk melody by the Northern Irish composer Herbert

Hughes in 1909 as part of his first volume of *Irish Country Songs*. Other songs in Britten’s volumes of folk song arrangements are settings of folk-like melodies by named composers, such as William Shield’s (1748-1829) melody for “The Ploughboy” found at the beginning of Britten’s third volume, and “Sally in our Alley,” a song allegedly composed by Henry Carey (1687-1743), set by Britten as the second song in volume five. More significantly, Britten turned to the melodies of Thomas Moore as the sources for his ten arrangements comprising volume four, published in 1957. As a further evidence that Britten was not concerned with authenticity, he changed words and melodic figures to suit his compositional aims. While the collections of Cecil Sharp form the source for several settings, it is clear that with “The trees they grow so high” and “O Waly, Waly” Britten took a slight variation on Sharp’s three printed “original” versions, and in the latter, Britten’s text seems to be a conflation of two of them.

Indeed, the fact that Britten’s folk song settings were composed as recital pieces places them more in line with art songs, and their construction and accompaniments bear many resemblances to *Lieder* accompaniments by Schubert. Beyond the obvious comparisons between the strophic nature of these folk song settings and Schubert’s own treatments of strophic verse, almost all of Britten’s settings are based on a single pianistic motif which somehow encapsulates the mood of the whole. Moreover, this motif, again like Schubert, has multiple applications through modification and expansion, often for reasons of textual illustration. Pears indicated that Britten “wanted to recreate these melodies with their texts for concert performance, to make them art-songs...he therefore
takes the tune as if he had written it himself and thinks himself back as to how he would turn it into a song." 14

Because these songs were all arrangements, utilizing sources that in some cases bore copyrights, Britten composed them for recitals and waited to publish them later, in collections when the legal issues could be ironed out by his publishers. This left some settings unpublished until after his death, namely the ten songs published in the volume titled *Tom Bowling and other Song Arrangements*. But the composition of these arrangements spans from the beginning of his recital partnership with Peter Pears in 1941 and continued for nearly two decades.

Vaughan Williams recognized that only good would come from further exploration of these folk song melodies. After reviewing the first volume of Britten’s arrangements in 1943, he wrote

Are we old fogeys of the Folk song movement getting into a rut? If so, it is very good for us to be pulled out of it by such fiery young steeds as Benjamin Britten.... We see one side of a folk song, they see the other. They probably think our point of view hopelessly dull and stodgy, but that is no excuse for us to label them self-conscious or deliberately freakish. Personally I am delighted to see these rocketings come to a sound terra firma from which I believe all flights of fancy must take off—beautiful melody, spontaneous melody, melody which belongs essentially to us. The tune’s the thing with which we’ll catch the conscience of the composer. Do these settings spring from a love of the tune? Then, whatever our personal reaction may be we must respect them.... Welcome, then, the younger generation who will push along the highway, turning now to the

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14 Lewis Foreman, Liner notes in *Benjamin Britten: The Folksong Arrangements*, compact disc, Hyperion 66941/2, 2000, 8. Another author places these settings in their proper context: “They gave Britten the chance, for example, to declare his independence from the ‘Pastoral School’ by conceiving the exercise of arrangement very differently. Unlike Cecil Sharp and Vaughan Williams, who assigned an idealized, essential artistic quality to the melodies which their accompaniments were thought to reflect, Britten recognized that the venue changed the genre and turned them in effect into *Lieder* or art-song, and proceeded brilliantly on that premise. To see how far he got one should turn from the easy seductiveness of *The Salley Gardens* and the psychological perceptiveness of *The Ash Grove* to the exquisite and exhilarating settings of *Moore’s Irish Melodies.*” Philip Brett, ‘Britten, (Edward) Benjamin: North America, 1939-42’, *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy, <http://www.grovesmusic.com> (15 August, 2006).
right, now to the left, each divagation balancing the other so that in the end the straight line is kept intact.” 19

Frank Howes, chief music critic of The Times, seems to reveal through contradictory statements that these settings by Britten, so different from the settings by the older school of composers, were difficult to grasp. Writing about a recording Britten and Pears had made of some of the settings from the published volume three of arrangements, he stated,

The merit of these arrangements is that the music arises straight out of the song, from the words rather than the tune, yet not offending against the tune. That they are not like Sharp or Vaughan Williams or Moeran merely shows that we have come to the next generation to whom folk song once more reveals new life.20

And yet, in the fifth edition of Grove (1954) he wrote that Britten has never immersed himself in folk song, as Bartók and Vaughan Williams did, and his actual settings are unequal just because his acquaintance with it is comparatively superficial—perhaps the quickness of his mind is a snare… The collections of English folk songs contain some strained examples, but other show once again that extraordinary mixture of sophisticated ingenuity with simplicity of effect.21

It is clear that time and perspective were necessary to put these settings into their proper context. That Britten found inspiration from these melodies and crafted art songs instead of mere arrangements is token of his genius. It is true that in his examples he advanced beyond what had come before him, and rightly so. As Pears indicated, Britten approached these melodies as if he had written them himself, and in an all-consuming manner made arrangements that bore his musical signature. Vaughan Williams and the older school can be said to have had the objective of not merely arranging the melody, but attempting to make it accessible to a wider public in discreet, authentic settings that

19 Mitchell and Reed, 347.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
honored the original source with which they themselves were familiar. Britten was not interested in discretion; rather, he was in the business of composing, of self-expressing, and found such an opportunity in these melodies and his settings of them.

Benjamin Britten’s artistic contribution to the setting of British Isles folk melodies parallels a similar development roughly a century earlier, as Beethoven and others responded to the invitation to set British Isles folk melodies for the Scottish publisher George Thomson (1757-1851). In direct contrast to the folk song preservation movement of the early twentieth-century, it seems that there was a public appetite for popular melodies, or at least those that had been clothed in a more civilized garb. Britain, which had a reputation on the continent as being artistically backward, became appealing to those seeking inspiration from the “noble savage.” This was in part fueled by the Ossianic craze—the Gaelic poetry of James Macpherson, writing under the alias “Ossian,” who supposedly had links with ancient times. One notable composer to come to Scotland for artistic inspiration was Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) in 1829.

Decades before continental composers became interested in their own folk music, British Isles folk songs had come into vogue. Not only were they being performed in major British cities, but, more significantly, they also found a place in the homes of the middle class where the piano and musical training were hallmarks of a refined and cultured upbringing. Various editions appeared, though most contained merely simple arrangements, hardly artistically “civilized.” George Thomson, recognizing this market, set his ambitions to profit by it. Simple folk melodies did not appeal to him, however, and he envisioned a grand collaboration with the best foreign talent available.

Thomson turned to Viennese composers and recruited Ignaz Pleyel (1791 to 1797) and Leopold Kozeluch (1797 to 1809) to make arrangements of tunes which he supplied. Beginning in 1799 he engaged no less a luminary than Josef Haydn (1799 to 1804) who
set nearly four-hundred melodies for voice and piano trio. Haydn had previously been hired by William Napier, another Scottish music publisher whom Haydn met during his first visit to London in 1791. Haydn contributed accompaniments to a collection published in 1792; its success enabled Napier to hire Haydn for an additional volume, which he published in 1795. Haydn, who by this point was living on a fixed pension, was paid handsomely by the British publishers during a period of rampant inflation. Towards the end of his collaboration Haydn had no qualms about apportioning some of these commissions to students such as Sigismund Neukomm and Frederic Kalkbrenner. Roughly thirty-two of the 430 settings attributed to Haydn are now thought to be composed by either of these two. Later, when Thomson had turned to Beethoven for folk song settings, Haydn would be engaged by published William Whyte and would produce over one hundred songs published between 1804–07.

Haydn's settings for Napier are the most simple of his examples. Described as being for voice and piano trio, they are in reality for voice and continuo, with the violin part very often doubling either the voice or melodic figures in the piano. The keyboard part is furthermore left in most instances unrealized, with figures implying the harmonies. His later settings for Thomson became slightly more sophisticated, with independence between the three instruments and a fully-harmonized piano part. It is important to note that Thomson was attempting to market his publications to amateur musicians, and as such requested simple settings from his composers. Haydn seemed to understand the caliber of musician for whom he was writing, and apparently turned out these voluminous settings with ease. Their character is fairly typical of late-eighteenth century Viennese style. Haydn was charged by Thomson with two facets of these settings: to write accompaniments, or to harmonize the melody, and to write "symphonies," or to provide introductions and postludes—in other words, material that would "fill in" between the
verses. Thomson was very satisfied with the quality of Haydn’s examples, even though in this context they often are the most basic of musical exercises.

Following his dealings with Haydn, Thomson enlisted Beethoven to compose arrangements of British Isles folk melodies. Between 1809 and 1820 Beethoven would set nearly 200 melodies. Much has been speculated on whether this endeavor was fueled by Beethoven’s own artistic desires or whether he treated these tasks as hack work—as merely a commercial proposition. His grumblings with Thomson through letters, which have been well-documented, can be paired down to a few basic issues. One of Beethoven’s chief complaints was that he felt he was not being paid enough (what composer ever does?). He recognized that his work in this endeavor was of higher quality than the other composers Thomson enlisted and felt he ought to be compensated accordingly. Another issue seems to center around the fact that Thomson requested the accompaniments from his enlisted composers by sending them the melodies without the text, sometimes with a brief explanation on the general mood required for the desired accompaniment. Even when he supplied texts he was in the habit of exchanging or supplanting a given text with what he felt to be a more suitable text from another melody. This aggravated Beethoven, who by this time was an experienced Lied composer and felt a certain passion for maintaining complete control over the creation of a given composition. Being deprived of the texts to work with made his process more difficult, and yet he still managed to produce settings that are full of imagination, beauty, and deep artistic expression. Without the sometimes multiple stanzas of the text, with their varied moods and meanings, Beethoven still managed to capture the character of the music by translating the supplied title or explanation and extracting the mood from the melody. Indeed, his settings are built almost entirely on musical material derived directly from the melodies themselves.
One final source of friction between the two came out of the reality that Thomson, as with Haydn, was gearing his collections to the “mediocre, amateur pianists who were the chief users of this type of music.” He desired the accompaniments to be no more than moderately difficult; in order to find them marketable they needed to not challenge his potential buyers too much. Beethoven felt that the Scotsman’s notion of what was difficult overly constricted his creativity, annoying him greatly. It is true that these folk song settings were played and sung in Britain mainly by unmarried girls, usually in their teens, with perhaps three to five years’ experience on the piano. In Beethoven’s examples are found various passages in the piano parts that would intimidate such performers, including passages of triplets in one hand against duplets in the other, or rapid scales in either hand.

But none of those grievances supports the argument that Beethoven despised the process. Rather, it seems more likely that he found it challenging and and even artistically rewarding. He reportedly even turned down other commissions as he was working on the folk songs for Thomson; with his roughly 180 settings, by numbers alone he devoted more in terms of output to folk song settings than in any of his other genres. He even sought out, at Thomson’s request, folk melodies from continental regions and arranged them in similar manner to the British Isles settings, though these were never published by Thomson. Beethoven was a great composer with a high level of artistic integrity, which prevented him from completing work that was below a certain standard. It is his contributions, more than any other of his contemporaries engaged by Thomson, that survive today is performance.

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22 Ibid., 28.
Beethoven took great care to provide music filled with richness and invention, furnishing pieces that were fully worked out and which produce vivid effects. As per Thomson's instructions, the settings are most generally for piano trio, with occasional optional versions that include other instruments, such as flute. Here, unlike the examples supplied by Haydn, the various instrumental lines are independent of each other, often receiving extended solo passages in the form of ritornellos between the verses of the folk song melody. These passages do much to embellish the meaning of the melodic line, if not the text, and add much artistic depth to the songs. Indeed, these settings are compositions more so than arrangements.

Thomson first contacted and attempted to engage Beethoven in his project as early as 1803, but it was not until six years later that Beethoven agreed to collaborate. The first fruits of his labors were completed in July of 1810, but their saga in reaching Edinburgh was arduous. The Napoleonic wars were at their height, and it was only with great difficulty that a parcel could be transmitted between Vienna and Scotland. Beethoven sent three copies of the first set by different routes, and when none arrived a year later he sent at least one further copy. None reached Thomson until about July of 1812. A later set of songs sent by Beethoven in February of 1813 encountered similar problems. As before three copies were sent, including two via Paris but at different times. One of these made it as far as the French coast, but could not legally cross the English Channel because of Napoleon's embargo. Thomson then tried to enlist the help of smugglers who refused because the parcel was so bulky. Finally, after a year of endeavors the second set of songs was received.

By the time Thomson enlisted Beethoven in his project he had already published four volumes of Scottish songs which had been harmonized by Pleyel, Kozeluch and Haydn. Desiring to broaden his approach, he sent Beethoven Irish and Welsh melodies
which are the sources for his first two collections. Thomson’s sources for the melodies were varied. In the case of the Welsh tunes he made his own journey through Wales to collect examples. His approach paralleled that of the collectors a century later, as he traveled through the countryside and inquired after the existence of local songs from bards and harpers. Many of the Irish melodies he found in various printed editions available at the time, or he relied on friends sending him tunes. Later, when he decided to publish another volume of Scottish songs, he again relied on many tunes with which he was personally familiar.

In all, Thomson published two volumes of Beethoven’s Irish settings in 1814 and 1816, a volume of Welsh settings in 1817, and a Scottish volume in 1818. Four more volumes of Scottish melodies followed with publications in 1822, 1825, 1839 and 1842. Altogether Thomson published 126 of Beethoven’s British Isles folk song settings. The examples of Continental folk songs did not materialize since he was unable to obtain suitable translations. Thomson requested various revisions of the settings he received from Beethoven; in one instance, Beethoven refused to simplify settings which Thomson felt were too difficult and produced entirely new settings of nine melodies. In another instance, Beethoven anticipated the request and sent two alternative settings of the same melody, inviting Thomson to choose whichever he preferred. Together with various revisions Beethoven’s accumulated British Isles folk song settings amount to 150, with ten examples duplicating earlier settings.

Thomson recognized the high quality he was given in the Beethoven settings. Upon receiving the first package in 1812 he returned to Beethoven a letter expressing “the greatest admiration,” adding that “they are all worthy of the greatest applause.” To others he described them with even greater enthusiasm, expressing that they were “as much superior to the every day works we meet with, as the Dramas of Shakespeare
transcend those of ordinary Compilers for the stage.” 24 Despite their understood value, however, none of them sold well. Thomson finally concluded they were too difficult for their intended public; in 1821 he lamented that Beethoven “composes for posterity.” In the end, Thomson did not reclaim the investment he had made in the project of publishing folk song settings. One remark has been made that “his love of the musical project gradually overtook financial considerations.” 25 Instead, his efforts inspired the production of a rich collection, especially in the Beethoven examples, certainly to gain value, stature and appreciation in future years, as is so much the case with art of great worth.

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3. Analysis of Specific Folk Song Arrangements

3.1 Introduction

Embarking upon creating a new composition, a composer naturally takes certain parameters into account to limit his materials. Choices are made to feature or favor specific melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and timbral materials. Choices of structure and form also impose specific limitations on a work. Looking back through the perspective of the past century, with its far-reaching developments in musical expression, the late eighteenth century appears to be somewhat prescriptive in its manner of musical choices, but they were certainly present, nonetheless. Classical era composers are understood through the way they favored certain formal and harmonic applications; but even aleatoric and chance operations explored in twentieth-century works have limitations imposed by the composer. The consequent process of analysis, therefore, is to define these parameters, revealing these choices and how they are implemented. In the case of song arranging, the preexisting melody becomes the limiting tool by which the perimeters are set. Comparing the way different composers have dealt with the same or similar melodies can become a useful tool in understanding these composers’ organizational processes and reveal the degree to which originality is achieved in their creation.

This limitation is perhaps also why these folk song arrangements are often unjustly overlooked. On the surface it would seem that this is a simple process, amounting merely to providing a given melody an adequate a harmonization. A melody, in many ways, will determine its own course, implying harmonic material through the scale it utilizes, and will similarly suggest its own rhythmic, metric, and even formal structure from its various characteristics. But this is exactly why these folk song arrangements deserve closer inspection, for the way in which these composers have made
arrangements, arguably with one compositional “hand tied behind their back” through the use of a supplied melody, reveals much about their genius.

In the following examples it will become clear that these four composers had various motivations behind the crafting of their arrangements, from financial gain to purely artistic expression, with varying shades in between. The examples will also reveal that one very obvious limitation to their available choices is the degree to which there is a common style during the era in which they lived and composed. The examples by Haydn and Beethoven will naturally reflect elements more typical of a Classical style, and Vaughan Williams and Britten will utilize style aspects that were prevalent in the early twentieth century. The manner in which their arrangements are crafted in response to these norms, utilizing as well as challenging them, will further demonstrate their proficiency. Perhaps the most significant aspect to influence their musical choices, however, will come through a degree of functionality toward their intended audience—performers and listeners alike—who will bear an influence on the way the settings are designed. All of these songs were created to be performed with specific groups of performers in mind with varying degrees of technical proficiency. They also had an intended audience. But despite these external influences, the most revealing aspect will be the manner in which these composers find originality and individuality in their harmonizations of these melodies.

The original intent of this analysis was to find settings of a single melody common to a larger body of composers between the late seventeenth and early twentieth centuries, but several complicating factors made the realization of this goal impossible. Even with a study limited to Haydn, Beethoven, Vaughan Williams and Britten, the body of arranged folk song melodies approaches nearly eight hundred songs. The largest obstacle in searching through these collections is that titles of songs are not consistent, especially in
Haydn’s collections, the largest individual body of composed songs, nearing four hundred. One cannot search by titles alone, for similar melodies often appear with different texts, and texts were often supplied by the publishers, not the composers. Conversely, and just as hindering, a title and text will occasionally be applied to completely different melodies. No doubt there are additional interesting comparisons to be found among these collections, but beyond happenstance in locating them, identifying them will only be possible after making a thorough, indexed catalog of all the melodies.

Instead, this section will compare melodies that have either been set by a pair of composers, or, as in the case of Vaughan Williams, one melody set in various different ways. These comparisons will attempt to reveal the compositional processes that led each composer to a unique and original solution while working within the limitations proscribed by a given melody. A composer’s musical identity will become apparent through the kinds of material he selects in his settings.

3.2 Vaughan Williams: “Bushes and Briars”

The main motivation behind folk song collecting of the turn of the twentieth century—as explained earlier in this paper—resulted in a somewhat cautious approach to the way they were presented in publication. Although Vaughan Williams’s initial contributions are melodies with simple accompaniments, he later took steps towards more exploratory artistry; he also veered in the opposite direction, returning to the domain of the Purist. The most blatant example of the latter is one of the final efforts before his death, a collaboration with A. L. Lloyd editing The Penguin Book of English

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14 For example, a late discovery—too late to be incorporated here—of an additional setting of the melody used by Haydn and Britten in “O Can You (Ye) Sew Cushions” appears as Beethoven’s Op. 108, No. 3, “Oh! sweet were the hours.”
**Folk Songs.** Here the melodies are given without any accompaniment whatsoever. In an explanatory Introduction\(^\text{27}\), he states, in part:

> The ideal way to sing an English folk song, of course, is unaccompanied. Our melodies were made to be sung that way, and much of their tonal beauty and delightful suppleness comes from the fact that they have been traditionally free from harmonic or rhythmic accompaniment. They are best suited to stand on their own, and we rather agree with the Dorset countryman who commented on a professional singer of folk songs: ‘Of course, it’s nice for him to have the piano when he’s singing, but it does make it very awkward for the listener.’\(^\text{28}\)

This edition of folk songs attempts to celebrate the manner in which these melodies were enjoyed before their discovery, as solo, unaccompanied songs. Straddling the fence still, however, Vaughan Williams and Lloyd offer that “for those to whom the unaccompanied voice seems naked” it may be acceptable to invent an accompaniment by adding “a few supporting chords” on another instrument, preferably piano or guitar, but also concertina, mouth-organ, fiddle, banjo, zither, or harmonium are suggested. Vaughan Williams provided three “Specimen Accompaniments” as examples of how this might be done. In each instance, the melody is supported with occasional chords, unobtrusively, as in the first example, sometimes leaving important beats of the measure empty; or more involved, as in the third, where a steady rhythm of downbeats and off-beats is implied. But this edition clearly prefers the unaccompanied singing of these tunes. One of the Introduction’s final statements reiterates “but we hope that our readers will sing the songs unaccompanied as much as possible.”\(^\text{29}\)

Conversely, some of the most intriguing examples of Vaughan Williams’s daring exploration with the settings of folk melodies are demonstrated in his versions for vocal

\(^{27}\) This Introduction is also co-authored by A. L. Lloyd, and one has to wonder to what extent these thoughts are by him or Vaughan Williams.


\(^{29}\) Ibid.
ensembles. Here he strays furthest from his role as collector and becomes a true composer. So far, sufficient evidence has not emerged to reveal the purposes behind most of his folk song settings for choirs; it seems fair to suppose that, like the *Folk Songs of the Four Seasons* mentioned earlier, most of his choral settings were intended for performances by established ensembles that, in some cases, he himself may have been conducting. Because of the functionality of these compositions, and because these were arrangements (in most cases) of melodies already collected and published in simple settings for voice and piano, it seems that Vaughan Williams allowed himself greater freedom in exploring more adventurous ideas. Choral settings were also more open to originality and invention because there were other embellished settings already in existence. Percy Grainger, for example, made a significant contribution to this trend with his 1902 arrangement of “Irish Tune from County Derry,” a setting that now seems quite conservative, but at the time in many ways was adventurous. So Vaughan Williams seems to have responded to the standards that were in place in each instance: the conservative, solo-vocal folk song collector’s aesthetic on the one hand, and the more open-to-inovation choral setting on the other.

An example demonstrating these various aspects can be seen in his three arrangements of the first tune he collected, “Bushes and Briars.” The first setting he made was for solo voice with piano accompaniment. Appropriately appearing as the opening selection in his first publication of folk melodies in 1908, this version also bears many of the characteristics outlined by the Specimen Accompaniments he demonstrated in *The Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*. The melody is given distinct prominence; in fact, Vaughan Williams indicated with a note at the bottom of the first page of music that if desired, the entire first verse may be sung unaccompanied.
The “Bushes and Briars” melody occupies twelve measures which divide into three phrases. When Vaughan Williams notated the melody, he indicated a repetition of the second and third phrases,\(^{30}\) which is reflected in this setting. Because the repetition of the third phrase is only three measures long, the resultant length of each verse is an irregular nineteen measures.

Example 3-1. Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars,” melodic phrases.

1st Phrase:

2nd Phrase:

3rd Phrase:

Repetition of 2nd and 3rd Phrase:

The accompaniment at the beginning of the setting is first given block chords, unobtrusively sustaining the presence of the melody. Vaughan Williams’s harmonization of the first two measures provides some insight into his aesthetic. Here the melody presents a problem for harmonization because of its stepwise motion: following an initial leap from the fifth (\(^5\)) to the first (\(^1\)) scale degrees, it moves stepwise up and down, returning to the first (\(^1\)) scale degree near the end of the second measure. These adjacent pitches can not belong to any single triad, and suggest the need for chord changes.

\(^{30}\) A facsimile reproduction of his manuscript of “Bushes and Briars” can be seen in Palmer, xi.
Vaughan Williams makes a simple choice by harmonizing the first measure entirely in tonic A-minor, and the second measure with E-minor, a minor-dominant chord. This in effect divides each measure of melody into equal, though displaced, halves of harmonized and non-harmonized melodic tones. More significantly, the agogic accent in both measures is consequently left to the non-chord tone:

Example 3-2. Ralph Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars,” mm. 1-6.\(^{31}\)

\[\text{Lento e molto espressivo} \]

1. Through bushes and through briars, I late-ly took my way; All

A motif on pitches E, G, and A (scale degrees 5, 6, and 1) will be used significantly throughout the setting. It first appears in the top voice of the accompaniment in measures three through five; it consequently is given at other cadence points, specifically at the end of both statements of the third melodic phrase (mm. 11-13, 19-21, 39-41, and 51-53) in verses one and two (see Example 3-3). In the last two verses this motif also appears in the treble staff of the piano at the conclusion of the first statement of the third melodic phrase (mm. 51-53 and 71-73).

The harmonic treatment of the first two measures of the first verse is similarly applied in the remaining verses. The second verse at this point is an identical reiteration of the first; the third uses an arpeggiated statement of these same chords in the left hand of the piano; and the fourth verse returns to the block chords of the first (and second)

verse—implying a kind of thematic return—although the E minor chord is given in first inversion and sounds in a higher register. The effectual dissonance between the accompaniment and the resultant non-chord melodic tones implies that the melody will be given prominence. In this manner Vaughan Williams seems to nod to the influence of those who appreciated these melodies with as little accompaniment as possible. It is a gesture born out of simplicity, and reinforces the folk song purists’ notion that the accompaniment ought to be subjugated to the melody. In similar fashion, his solution for this opening two-measure passage in the third verse is somewhat telling. Here he attempts to accommodate both camps, so to speak, reinforcing the melody at the same time exploring innovation. He retains the one-chord-per-measure quality in the bass of the piano while harmonizing the melody in parallel thirds, augmenting the tension through dissonance between these polar tonalities in this context. This seems to reflect the “uneasy” and “troubled” state alluded to in the text.

Vaughan Williams treats the remaining phrases of each verse with less dissonance, resulting in almost no additional non-chord tones. The character of this melody facilitates this: the rhythm slows down, providing longer note values to embellish with harmony. More significantly, the melody in these two phrases features a descending scale from E (scale degree 5) back to the tonic pitch, which Vaughan Williams harmonizes in parallel tenths. Finally, the last melodic phrase imitates the first two measures, with its one-chord-per-measure tendency implied by the elongated note values.

As already stated, the accompaniment given to the first verse is repeated almost identically underneath the second (the last chord of the second verse is harmonized differently from the first). This facilitates the optional singing of the first verse unaccompanied; if performed in this manner, the simple, static chords at the beginning of the verse naturally emerge out of the melody of the unaccompanied first verse. But even
if the pieces is sung with both verses accompanied, there is enough variety in the accompaniment that redundancy is obscured. The block chords of the opening measures give way to parallel tenths in the outer voices and suspensions between the inner voice and the bass in the second phrase. A sense of arc is accomplished as the static block chords return at the end of the verse.

In similar fashion, as the song progresses beyond the nearly-identical second verse, the accompaniment gradually takes on a slightly more important role with increased rhythmic and harmonic motion in the third verse. By the end of this verse, however, the block chords return, and despite the indicated climax in dynamic intensity at the end of the fourth line of text, the fourth verse retains the slower, steady harmonic pacing of the opening measures through the return of block chord motion. This overall expansion and reduction produces a natural arc: by the end of the piece the simplified, chordal accompaniment returns, following the contrasting rhythmic and harmonic activity during the third verse.

One mark of a composer's artistry in these settings is the manner in which repetitions are handled; a lesser composer might simply copy the material he provides for the repeat from the original. Vaughan Williams demonstrates greater skill with his repetition of the second and third melodic phrase at the end of each verse. In the first (and second) verse he makes a simple but interesting choice to link the repeated phrase to its original by changing the direction of stepwise motion on the bass. The first time it is heard, the accompaniment on the second phrase (mm. 7-10) features descending tenths and suspensions, with the upper voice doubling the melody (one of the few instances of melodic duplication in the accompaniment). In the repetition of the second phrase (mm. 15-18) Vaughan Williams does the opposite, with an ascending scale, doubled between the
two hands of the accompaniment, that begins on the fifth scale degree (°5) and concludes an octave higher on the tonic pitch.

Example 3-3. Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars,” mm. 6-21 (reduction showing bass motion and E-G-A motif at phrase cadences).

In this setting, Vaughan Williams utilizes pitches from the melody’s Aeolian modal scale, with its flat sixth and seventh scale degrees removing any opportunity for the appearance of dominant or subdominant triads in major. Because there can therefore be no dominant-tonic cadence, Vaughan Williams has to utilize other means to achieve a sense of finality in the phrase structure. He achieves this through the use of tonic pedals on each of the repeated second and third melodic phrases. A sense of this pedal is implied in the first two verses beginning at the beginning of the repeated text (mm. 13 and 33); it begins in earnest two measures later on the restatement of the second melodic

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12 There has been much discussion in the literature of the modes utilized in various folk song melodies, and arguments have been made back and forth as to whether or not it is feasible to even ascribe a modal label on some melodies. One issue that complicates the harmonic treatment of these melodies by various composers is the fact that before the twentieth century (especially in the Classical era) there was a tendency to force these melodies into a major-minor harmonic context, often implying, especially in minor mode, leading tones to achieve a dominant-tonic relationship in the harmonic structure. Suffice it to say in this context that Vaughan Williams was aware of the modal qualities of these melodies and applied their use in his accompaniments.
phrase. Coming after the descending motion in the second melodic phrase, the appearance of this tonic pedal (mm. 15 and 35) lends a sense of return, implying finality in the absences of a dominant-to-tonic cadence. This pedal is only interrupted once—with an E minor chord for one measure (m. 24), reminiscent of the first phrase of the song—and then remains throughout the repeated lines of text until the ends of both verse. Vaughan Williams again uses this pedal-cadence technique on the last verse in the repeat of the second and third melodic phrases, only here he prepares the tonic pedal with a sense of dominant pedal on the fifth scale degree (♯5). Beginning in measure 67, this pedal lasts for a total of eight measures before moving to an extended pedal on the tonic, which remains through the end of the piece.

Characteristic of most of his settings, Vaughan Williams does not venture out of the tonic key. He does not pursue secondary tonic areas in these pieces, and certainly never utilizes key changes. This setting is a proper introduction to this aesthetic with one notable exception. He keeps the accompaniment to this melody completely in Aeolian mode except at one striking place during the final verse, when the singer recounts overhearing his lover state that she expects her love not to be returned. Here Vaughan Williams adds an F-sharp, resulting in a half-diminished seventh chord to harmonize the measure. It further significant that this pitch is altered from scale degree six (♯6), which is the only scale degree absent in the melody. Thus Vaughan Williams can be free to introduce it as an F-sharp and still remain true to the technique of utilizing pitches solely from the melody's given mode. He permits this altered pitch once more five measures later, after the lover questions whether boldness should overtake her and permit her to declare her love. It provides a subtle color change in an otherwise sea of fairly predictable harmonies, and allows for a striking moment. This missing F-sharp—the altered sixth
scale degree (°6)—also completes a gap existing in the E-G-A (°5-°7-°1) motif that has been used throughout the setting (see Examples 3-2 and 3-3).

A final aspect of this setting can be observed in the way the accompaniments line up with the verses, and whether or not cadence points occur independently of arrival points in the melody, or simultaneously. In this setting Vaughan Williams utilizes both of these possibilities. At the end of the first verse the last note of the melody is reinforced with a tonic root-position A-minor triad, resulting in a sense of cadence that aligns with the melodic closure in the voice. This tonic quality is prolonged through harmonic motion that precedes the beginning of the second verse. In some respects this is a more simplistic, even amateur method of creating a cadence at the end of verses, and Vaughan Williams employs more interesting means in the other verses. At the conclusion of the second verse, on the final note of the melody he changes the A minor tonic of the previous verse (up to this point both verses have been identically harmonized) to a first-inversion F major chord, a very weak ending in this harmonic context. The final resolution back to a-minor tonic does not occur until two measures later, coinciding with the °5-to-°1 entrance of the voice at the start of the third verse.

Example 3-4. Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars,” mm. 40-43.  

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33 Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Folk-Songs from the Eastern Counties*, 3.
The end of the third verse is similarly ambiguous, though this time, with the rhythmic return to block chords already in place, the accompaniment hesitates on a first-inversion tonic triad on the last note of the melody. This progresses to a passing chord which implies a dominant E minor seventh sonority by utilizing all the notes but the third of the chord. Avoiding the leading tone (because it is not contained in the melodic mode), he replaces the third of the chord (G) with a borrowed A, and arrives on A minor tonic at the downbeat of the first measure of the fourth verse of the text. In both of these instances he cleverly blurs the alignment of verses and cadence points, creating a continuing sense of flow between the verses.

Example 3-5. Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars,” mm. 60-63.\(^4\)

The same year that “Bushes and Briars” appeared in the collection of *Folk-Song from the Eastern Counties* (1908), Vaughan Williams published a setting of “Bushes and Briars” for unaccompanied four-part male voices. It is unclear which setting came first; presumably he dealt with them in the order presented here—the solo version coming before the choral—but it does not necessarily matter, since his initial dealing with the melody in solo form had already began as he collected it in 1903. One of the first notable differences in this setting for male voices from the solo vocal setting is that Vaughan

\(^4\) Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Folk-Songs from the Eastern Counties*, 4.
Williams eliminates the repeat of the second and third melodic phrases in the first three verses. (He utilizes this repetition in the fourth verse, however, reserving it as a gesture of finality for the last verse.) Another difference is that he arranges the opening line of the melody so that the non-chord tones appearing in the solo vocal version are now harmonized. Here in the first measure the melody in the Tenor I voice—against the underlying tonic pedal in the Bass II voice—is reiterated on the second beat with similar motion a sixth below in the Baritone voice. In the second measure all voices return to the tonic chord on the second beat, and harmonize the last melodic pitch of the measure with a major chord on the subtonic, serving as a secondary dominant and creating a strong pull into the major mediant occurring on the downbeat of the next measure.

Example 3-6. Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars” (TTBB), mm. 1-4 (simplification).

Through bush-es and through bri - ars I late-ly took my way;

Vaughan Williams utilizes a clever structural device in organizing the strophic nature of the piece. The first verse is followed by a different setting on the second, all of which is repeated on the third and fourth verses, resulting in an ABAB structure. This allows the verses to be varied while maintaining a sense of flow, and without making the arrangement too terribly difficult for the ensemble. As the conductor of various choral ensembles during the course of his career, Vaughan Williams must have understood that with vocal ensembles, simplicity and repetition are often the best techniques for success in the rehearsal process.

Three aspects of the contrasting second and fourth verses are worthy of mention. The first and most telling is the manner in which Vaughan Williams begins each verse,
especially in light of the previous discussion regarding the harmonic challenge raised by
the first two measures of the melody. Here harmonization is avoided altogether, and in a
manner that recollects the solo vocal setting, Vaughan Williams uses a sustained pedal in
the upper voices on the dominant pitch G while the lower voices sing the melody (see
Example 3-7). The second contrasting aspect of this verse occurs through the treatment
of the melody, unpredictably divided between the four voices, resulting in a mixture of
ranges and timbres on the melody and allowing for similar inventiveness in the
accompanying voices. The Tenor I voice is allowed a brief chance to soar with the
melody at the climax for two measures at the beginning of the third line of text, but
otherwise the melody belongs to the lower voices in general, and the Bass voice in
particular, which is given the melody at the conclusion of each verse. After the fourth
verse, though, the melody returns to the Tenor I voice during the single repetition of the
second and third melodic phrases. This allows for a sense of resolution and finality at the
end of the setting, which is important since there is no use of a dominant-tonic cadence to
strengthen an ending.

The third distinguishing aspect of this setting is a very brief departure from the
otherwise strict use of the Aeolian mode. In line with an expectedly straightforward
harmonization, Vaughan Williams does not treat this setting with any significant harmonic
surprises, except for a short appearance of a major dominant chord in this contrasting
second verse (and likewise in the parallel setting on the fourth verse). For one beat, and
as the result of a suspension in the Tenor II voice, he allows a B-natural (m. 17), although
it is a weak occurrence since the chord appears in the second inversion and does not
resolve back to tonic. Rather, it progresses deceptively to the mediant on the downbeat
of the next measure. The presence of the B-natural is further ambiguous since it is given
the first word of text from the next phrase, causing it to feel like an passing tone into the B-flat of the next measure:

Example 3-7. Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars” (TTBB), mm. 13-18.\footnote{Ralph Vaughan Williams, \textit{Bushes and Briars}, Essex Folk-Song Noted and Arranged for Four Men’s Voices (London: Novello & Co., 1908), 2.}

Sixteen years later Vaughan Williams returned once again to this melody and created a third setting, this time for unaccompanied mixed voices (SATB). Once again his harmonization honors the Aeolian mode of the melody with little variation. An important, unifying motif used throughout the setting is taken from a four-note figure in the Tenor I line on the second (and fourth) verse in the 1908 version for men’s voices.

Example 3-7a. Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars” (TTBB), Tenor I, mm. 13-18.

Beginning in measure 16, an ascending line of a minor third followed by a perfect fourth that resolves down a half-step becomes a characteristic counter to the melody, which at
that point features predominantly with stepwise motion. This motif is followed by a descending passage which is taken from the descending melodic steps in the heard at the beginning of the second melodic phrase in measures five through seven:

Example 3-8. Vaughan Williams, “Bushes and Briars” (SATB), comparison of melody and countermelody.

It is notable that in the setting for men’s voices there was no material used to bridge between verses, and here this motif is introduced for just this purpose in the mixed-voice setting. After the unaccompanied melody is established on the first verse (avoiding the harmonic difficulties previously mentioned), the motif is heard three times. First it appears in the soprano voice, followed by the tenors in imitation a measure later, then followed by the basses with the motif transposed into the lower extremes of their register. Significantly, this motif features a prominent sixth scale degree (°6)—again, the only scale degree not appearing in the melody.

Again in this third setting Vaughan Williams leaves off the repeated second and third melodic phrases that featured prominently in the 1908 setting for solo voice. Instead, the ascending motif, in cannon between the soprano, tenor and bass voices, forms a transition that becomes the accompaniment to the third verse sung by the altos. As it progresses during the verse it becomes gradually more and more out-of-sync with the melody, so that the fourth verse has to enter immediately on the heels of the third. Furthermore, the motif becomes so prominent that it nearly saturates every measure of
the melody and gradually overwhelms it. What results is an atmospheric tone of meditatively melancholy that comes right out of the text, and produces an other-wordly quality revealing that these folk song melodies belong to another time and age.

3.3. Vaughan Williams and Britten: “I Will Give My Love an Apple”; “She’s Like the Swallow”

If the folk song settings by Vaughan Williams for voice and piano are an exercise in authenticity, then the examples by Benjamin Britten are an exercise in originality. Britten sets these melodies in a way that enables them to be heard with a fresh perspective. For various reasons, in his early settings Britten avoided any connection to the ‘Folk Song School,’ and to the older generation of collector-composers, by setting melodies that were not linked to their sources. In his later collections he relaxed his stance and turned to some of the collections by Sharp and Vaughan Williams as sources for his melodies. Such is the case with these two examples, which are also unique in that they come from his two volumes composed for accompanying instruments other than piano. “I Will Give My Love an Apple,” set for voice and guitar, was published in 1961 with his sixth volume of arrangements; “She’s Like the Swallow,” set for voice and harp in 1976 was published posthumously in 1980.

As set by Vaughan Williams, these songs are a worthy comparison to Britten’s settings since they are examples of the composer as arranger only, and not both collector and arranger, as was the case with “Bushes and Briars.” “I Will Give My Love an Apple” is a Dorset melody collected by H. E. D. Hammond. As set by Vaughan Williams, it was included in the 1912 publication Folk Songs for Schools. Like his settings of “Bushes,” once again this version remains true to the modal quality of the melody by only utilizing those pitches in the accompaniment. There is no introduction
other than a tonic chord for two measures prior to the entrance of the voice. Once the
voice enters, however, the accompaniment becomes active, with passing tones and
suspensions ornamenting the melody (which is also doubled in the top voice of the
piano.) The accompaniment remains simple, with a mainly three-note texture throughout,
especially when rhythms in eighth-notes are present. Occasionally when block chords are
used—for example, at cadence points—he uses a four-voice texture, but this is scarce.

Another aspect of the song’s simplicity is the strophic setting of only one verse,
which is repeated for the second verse. A peculiarity of the version is a plagal cadence to
the tonic in major following the second verse. Perhaps this was Vaughan Williams’
attempt at extending the lover’s hopeful invitation expressed at the end of the second
verse of text:

My heart is the palace wherein she may be,
And she may unlock it without any key.

Apart from this single exception, in the Vaughan Williams example there are no
“wrong” notes; nothing appears in the accompaniment outside of the natural minor scale.
Significantly, as with the “Bushes” melody, scale degree 6 is also not common here.
Cadences are implied plagally, or with a minor dominant preparing a return to tonic,
similarly to the “Bushes and Briars” setting. The setting must have been made with
simplicity in mind, as the collection’s title implies, for accessibility to younger voices and
performers.

As set by Britten, the tune is also given a two-verse strophic setting, and
occupying only one page, is perhaps also one of Britten’s simpler treatments. But any
superficial similarities to Vaughan Williams’s setting cease there. The most striking
feature of this piece, apart from the accompaniment for guitar, is that the arpeggiated lines
given to the accompaniment in steady eighth notes are predominantly grouped in odd-
numbered sets, making it seem out of sync with the voice. Britten allows the two parts to line up at various points with increasing frequency during the second half of the verse (mm. 10, 14, 15, 17, and 18), which helps to give a drive toward finality in the absence of any regular dominant-tonic cadences. This increasing alignment also serves as a subtle variation the second half of both verses, providing an undulating flow in the song’s overall form when both verses are utilized.

Truer to his norm, Britten employs his own musical language here. The basic harmonic element at play seems to be the “pull” of the second to the first scale degree (♭2 to ♯1) at the base of each arpeggiated grouping. The opening sonority is built upon the second scale degree (♭2, pitch B), which after three reiterations returns to two phrases built upon the tonic (pitch A). The next groupings gradually ascend, pulling the furthest from the tonic scale degree (♯1) by reaching an F-sharp after the climax of the melody in the thirteenth measure. Immediately thereafter the bottom note of each arpeggiated set returns to the second scale degree (♭2, pitch B) again, reiterated three times, and preparing the ear once again to return to “tonic” on the first scale degree.

There are a few other basic similarities between versions. Perhaps a nod to the Vaughan Williams setting is provided through the way the piece begins and ends. Britten opens his setting with two measures of the same sonority, and although it is given as an arpeggiated chord, it still retains some of the static character in Vaughan Williams’s introduction. More obvious, however, is the appearance of the final chord in major, occurring twice in the last two measures. First it appears as the voice sings the final leap up to a C-natural, clashing with the major tonic chord with its dissonant C-sharp, and then the major sonority appears reiterated as a strummed chord on the voice’s final note in the last measure.

And she may unlock it without any key.

Less obvious, perhaps, but no less significant, is the fact that Britten retains the same A-natural minor mode key signature of Vaughan Williams’s setting.

Britten’s source for the second of these examples, “She’s like the swallow,” comes from a publication of melodies collected by Maud Karpeles (1885-1976) on the island of Newfoundland. Karpeles invited four composers to make arrangements of the melodies for publication; Vaughan Williams, who set “She’s like the swallow,” composed fifteen of the thirty arrangements. Like Cecil Sharp, and often in conjunction with him, Karpeles was one of the leading scholar-collectors of the early twentieth-century British folk song movement. She chronicled how many British Isles melodies made their way with immigrants to North America, as evidenced by her publications of the Newfoundland melodies, as well as her collaboration with Sharp in his publication of nearly 1,000 melodies from the southern Appalachians.

Vaughan Williams’s setting follows the early century folk song school norm. More like an art song, though, than his settings in Folk Songs for Schools, the accompaniment is given some independence from the melody. Occasionally it follows the melody, but never replicates it. The song, set in $\frac{6}{4}$ meter, is characterized by a steady succession of quarter notes that often alternates between the two hands of the piano, creating a constant rhythmic flow. These quarter notes frequently function to form

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consonances of thirds and sixths with the melody, especially in melodic passages featuring stepwise motion. As with "Bushes and Briars," the bass motion is predominantly static underneath this quarter note motion in the inner voices, resulting in momentary pedals. The harmonization honors the melody in the Dorian mode, though both raised and flat sixth scale degrees (♯6) are used. Once again Vaughan Williams avoids any statement of the dominant major chord, achieving finality instead through the bass line’s descent to scale degree one (♮1) at the arrival of the downbeat of the last line of text, a technique used similarly in other settings. In this way the tonic at the end of the piece is prepared by itself; its prolonged presence signifies that it is the final goal of the mode.

In his solo vocal settings Vaughan Williams is cautious not to let the composed material become overly prominent; perhaps this is why he so consistently avoids the use of prolonged introductions and postludes, which become like brief ritornellos between verses with repeats. This was an important feature in the Viennese settings a century earlier, perhaps another reason why Vaughan Williams avoids their use. In order to delineate verses, however, he does cleverly employ the use of brief connective material that accommodates the flow of one verse into the next, allowing the singer and listener alike a pause to mark their passage. Such an example is found in "She's like the swallow." The piece begins with a measure-and-a-half introduction which is retained, despite the repeat, in between verses.
Example 3-10. Vaughan Williams, “She’s like the swallow,” vs. 1, m. 7, to vs. 2, m. 2.  

This additional material adds one measure to the otherwise balanced, eight-measure length of each verse, producing a nine-measure, irregular phrase structure. The arrival point of each verse is consequently blurred, and an interesting flow in the overall pacing of the piece is maintained.

Britten’s setting of “She’s like the swallow” appears in his final collection of folk song settings, composed the year before his death. These songs are set for voice and harp, intended for Peter Pears and Osian Ellis (b. 1928), the great British harpist who is also an accomplished composer, singer, and authority on Welsh folk music. This was not Britten’s only music composed for Ellis, just as it was not his only music composed for Pears. Britten’s music for Ellis includes harp parts in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, War Requiem, the three church parables, and the Suite for Harp. Two years before his death Britten suffered a stroke during major heart surgery, leaving him unable to accompany Pears at the piano in their joint concerts. Pears, who was still at the height of his vocal powers, was in need of another accompanist and recital partner, but replacing Britten at the piano permanently with another accompanist was too painfully impossible (Pears made a failed attempt with Murray Perahia). It was Osian Ellis who stepped into the

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37 Maud Karpeles, ed., Folk Songs from Newfoundland, With Pianoforte Accompaniments by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Clive Carey, Hubert J. Foss, and Michael Mullinar, vol. 2 (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), 113. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
breach. In addition to the folk song settings for harp, Britten also composed *A Birthday Hansel* (written in 1975 to honor the Queen Mother) for the newly established recital pair. In the words of Graham Johnson, perhaps the most remarkable thing about these settings “is that they were written at all.” They were composed as a gift to a lifelong collaborator, the result of sheer “iron will and determination” of a mortally ill composer.  

In this context these pieces are rightly viewed as being more “slender” than some of the earlier Britten arrangements. As an example, “She’s like the swallow” can be reduced down to a harmonic pull between a perfect fifth and an augmented fourth above the tonic pitch. Britten plays with this oscillation throughout, preferring to conclude with the tri-tone on the final chord, leaving the text with an unresolved sense. The entrance of the voice occurs after one measure of each of these sonorities, the pair lining up with the regular phrasing of the melody. Two additional elements further reinforce the alignment of voice and harp: the running motion of steady eighth notes in the inner voices of the harp come to a complete stop at the end of the each of the melody’s first-verse phrases; also, the upper voice of the harp “shadows” the melody by doubling its significant pitches.

Britten contrasts that alignment at the end of the first verse by having the harp begin new material before the melody is through, starting a pattern of phrase-nonalignment which will continue during the second verse. Not only has the texture changed with rhythm in quarter notes, but the phrases are not synchronized due to the emergence of ascending scalar passages in the upper staff of the harp. Similar to the guitar arpeggios of Britten’s “I will give my love an apple,” these scales feature varying lengths that do not naturally line up with the meter. These passages are interrupted intermittently and at irregular intervals by three one-measure passages of eighth-notes, the

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18 Johnson, 84
first and third of which occur at phrase endings; the third also signals the end of the verse. Lending a degree of regularity, the treble staff features grace-note leaps in sevenths on the second beat of every other measure. This seems to come from the text, with its reference to “picking,” “plucking,” and “pulling” an “aperon full” of “primeroses.” A more subtle phrase reinforcement occurs in the bass clef of the harp, where the tonic pitch is reiterated through the end of the first phrase of melody, whereupon it changes to the subdominant pitch (♯4) for one phrase, changing again to the submediant (♭6) for the third phrase, and returning to tonic (♭1) via the lowered subtonic (flat ♭7) for the last phrase. In this way Britten utilizes a technique, similar to Vaughan Williams, to indicate finality by returning to the tonic pitch in the bass at the onset of the final phrase of the verse.

Very few of Britten’s folk song arrangements feature repeats; most have new accompanimental material composed for each verse. “She’s like the swallow” is likewise a through-composed setting, and the third verse takes on an additional character. This time the bass clef is given patterns of “rotating” octaves, leaping a minor third away from the tonic and returning after a half step. Again, strengthening the melodic phrase structure, the pattern transposes, moving to the subdominant (♯4) during the second melodic phrase. Similarly, during the first two melodic phrases the right hand oscillates between pairs of triads, one pair for each phrase. On the third phrase, Britten effectually allows the music to dissipate, reinforcing the text’s implication that the “fair maid” has died. On the last melodic phrase the rhythm slows to one-chord-per measure, and the treble-clef triads shrink through decreasing intervals until a glissando stops the accompaniment entirely. The remaining melody and text of the verse is rendered unaccompanied.
The final verse, which repeats the text of the first verse, returns to the running eighth-notes which accompanied the first verse. In a manner reminiscent of Schubert's *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, the harp needs an extra measure to regain momentum before the voice enters. This asymmetrical phrasing forces the strong beats of the melody to line up instead with the augmented-fourth harmony, the most dissonant of the two oscillation tonalities. However, the phrase structure of the accompaniment still lines up with the voice, stopping again to observe each phrase ending. Again, finality is achieved in the bass by a return to the tonic pitch during the last phrase of the verse.

3.4. Britten and Beethoven: “Sally in our Alley”; “The Miller of Dee”

One curious detail about many of Britten’s folk song arrangements is that several, as has already been noted, are not from folk song sources. The same was true of the Viennese settings commissioned by George Thomson and others. Occasionally a tune that had been borrowed from another source slipped into the collections. Barry Cooper points out that the term *folk song*

*can never have a very rigid definition, and most of the melodies that had not originated as folk songs had taken on folk song-like characteristics over a period of time; in other words, they had become well known amongst the general populace and were treated as if folk songs, subjected to minor modifications and often transmitted orally, even if they had originated as composed art music.*  

Both “Sally in our Alley” and “The Miller of Dee” have sources other than authentic folk song, but very likely became associated with that style as they became well-known.

A version of the song “Sally in our Alley,” as already mentioned, was composed by Henry Carey (1687-1743) for a performance *en travesti* given at Drury Lane in 1717. However, Carey’s melody is not the same as that used by Britten and Beethoven in their

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settings, and it is very likely that as Carey’s melody underwent popularization, it took on various modifications, so that once it was collected and transmitted into other printed sources the variations were preserved instead of the original. The fact that Thomson published this London song tune as a part of his collections of Scottish melodies further reveals that the tune certainly could have undergone a metamorphosis as it traveled north, although the regional references and groupings in his publications are not always accurate and cannot be completely trusted. In Thomson’s edition the song is noted as an “Old English” Ballad.40

The accounts of the Drury Lane performances of Carey’s song further seem to indicate that the rendition was meant to be humorous, but both of these settings frankly explore the beauty and pure emotion in this melody and text and seem to take it seriously. Perhaps this shift in characterization is another symptom of the melody’s popularization. The text tells of an apprentice who is not free to love his Sally for societal reasons, and he sings of how he longs to be with her. In the end he endures all manner of persecution for his love’s sake.

Beethoven set the melody in 1817 and it appeared published as the last number of a collection of twenty-five Scottish songs the following year. As already noted, Beethoven set these songs for piano trio accompaniment with great skill.41 In this example the strings are given the harmonic support for the piece, with the cello supplying the lowest pitch, and very often the root of the chord. Except for the beginnings and endings of phrases, they play off the beat, adding great lightness and charm to the


41 Occasionally he added a flute part, and such a version of this setting exists. It mainly doubles the violin, taking the upper note of the violin’s double-stops when they occur.
arrangement. The piano accompaniment has a kind of jolly prance, with bouncing staccato triads supplying the inner voices of the chords.

Harmonically there are very few surprises in this setting; Beethoven chooses harmonies that support the melody and text. The third phrase is the most adventurous, featuring a tonicization with the appearance of a flat seventh scale degree (♭7, C-natural), which Beethoven accommodates by proceeding through the subdominant and then to the dominant key areas via secondary function:

Example 3-11. Ludwig van Beethoven, “Sally in our alley,” mm. 12-16.\textsuperscript{12}

This phrase also demonstrates some effective, though simple counterpoint. As the melody dips in thirds, the bass of the piano oscillates a third lower and then a fourth lower, forming a pedal on the tonic pitch D; finally, as the voice descends after reaching its zenith, the bass of the piano accommodates with an ascending line to the fifth scale degree (♭5) and dominant preparation for the return to tonic in the last phrase.

In several of his folk song settings, Beethoven obscures any sense of meter in the introduction before the vocal entrance. In “Sally,” which is set in $\frac{3}{4}$ meter, the violin and cello enter on the third beat of the second bar at the same time as the piano initiates a four-beat pattern of ascending sixteenth-notes; the strings are tied over until a second reiteration of their chord, again on the third beat of the next measure, followed by descending passages in eighths in the piano and sixteenths in the violin (see Example 3-14). The effect is one of obscuring any sense of downbeat, making the vocal entrance an almost complete surprise.

Beethoven made use of clever motivic elements from these melodies in his settings. He seemed to be fond of the upward leap at the end of each of the first two melodic phrases in this folk song, a kind of “Sally” motif—the pitches heard when her name is first sung. Each time it appears in the vocal melody it is immediately imitated in the piano. In the final instrumental coda the cello is given a segment of the first phrase of the vocal melody, afterwards the “Sally” motif becomes a kind of thematic cadence on the downbeats of the final three bars. This appears alternately stated between the piano (doubled by the violin) and the cello. Subtle use of this motif lends a degree of cohesiveness to the setting.

Neither the Beethoven nor the Britten setting use all seven verses of Carey’s eighteenth-century text. Thomson’s choice of text for Beethoven’s setting omits verses three and five, and alters the final phrase of the seventh verse. Since Thomson in all cases exerted final control over the texts, it seems safe to assume it was his decision. Slightly more significant, however, is Britten’s reorganization of Carey’s text in his setting, switching the order of verses three and four, and omitting verses two and six.

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1 The references to “wedding” and “bedding” Sally were probably too inappropriately intimate for early nineteenth century British consumers of this genre. Thomson frequently expurgated texts which he felt might be offensive. A similar practice occurred with many of the early twentieth-century British folk song collectors.
Britten’s setting is grouped in strophic pairs; his first and second verses are given the same accompaniment, as are the third and fourth, and the fifth verse receives unique treatment. His choice and ordering of the text’s verses reveals his preference for the storyline of the text with its associations to his particular musical material. Carey’s first and fourth verses of text (which become Britten’s first and second verses) are linked with similar musical material, amounting to simple, block chords on the first and third beats of each measure. Carey’s third and fifth verses follow in Britten’s setting, and are similarly linked, with slightly more aggressive musical material.

Britten’s setting appeared along with his fifth volume of folk song arrangements, published in 1961. The harmonic structure of the introduction and interludes relies heavily on the interval of a second. Prior to the first vocal entrance, the piano part features streams of arpeggiated seventh chords (the outer pitches form a second in inversion), whose bass pitches form parallel ninths (a second displaced by an octave), and which descend seven steps in the treble from C-natural down to the tonic pitch, D. The bass, though displaced after the first two steps, similarly descends from B down to D. Additionally, the stepwise motion exhibited in each of these outer voices makes a reference to the material which follows, and which will be used to accompany the verses:

Example 3-12. Benjamin Britten, “Sally in our alley,” mm. 1-4 (annotated to show stepwise motion and intervalic 2nds).
This idea is switched between the hands in the interludes preceding the third and fourth verses so that the "melody" of the introduction is now in the bass clef. The material that bridges the fourth verse into the fifth is based upon an ascending scalar seventh, beginning on B and finishing an octave higher on A (the octave is displaced before the last three steps) while arpeggiated seventh chords, again in both staves and in contrary motion form a gradually ascending gesture. This section, marked *forte* and *energetic*, serves as the climax of all the interludes. Each has had more intensity, perhaps reinforcing the desire and longing throughout the text which leads to the eventual union of the two lovers in the fifth verse.

The harmonic structure of the passages accompanying the melody is likewise based on stepwise motion. Occasionally it is obscured in the bass, but it is nevertheless ever-present. Underlying the melody of each verse are chords built from a bass line that ascends in an eight-note scale (utilizing both the flat as well as the raised seventh scale degree) from D2 to D3. This repeats for the second melodic phrase (which is melodically identical to the first), then descends during the third (without the raised seventh scale degree), only to ascend again on the last phrase, again identically to the first. In this way the third phrase, which is also melodically unique (AABA), is further differentiated from the first, second, and fourth phrases by the ascending scale. A solitary D2 on the second beat before the beginning of the last melodic phrase makes sense in this context, for it becomes both the final note of the third phrase’s descent and the first note of the fourth phrase’s ascent.

The charm of this piece is that the simple structure based on scales is not immediately perceptible because of the sometimes unusual choices used to harmonize each pitch, and the changing relationship of the bass to the melody. The scale simply provides a logical organization and underlying structure. The triads and seventh chords
that build upon these scales come mostly from within the context of the key signature, though the flat seventh scale degree (7) which he appropriately harmonizes with a C major triad makes a particularly striking sound, given that it underlies a melodic B in the penultimate measure of the first, second, and fourth melodic phrases.

Britten also makes use of the same ascending, intervalic sixth "Sally" motif which appeared in Beethoven's setting. Here it adds to the structure of the piece by increasing its presence as the song progresses. In the first and second verses it appears only before the voice enters; in the third and fourth verses it appears more often. Again, it serves as a cadential figure before the voice enters in the third and fourth verses; then, reminiscent of Beethoven, it appears on the same pitches as the voice at the ends of phrases. But its presence begins to be more saturated here, although at first it is obscured in a texture of ascending triads in the treble clef. The motif occurs once per measure in the first two phrases; then, augmenting the difference in the third phrase, it appears twice in each measure. On the last phrase of verses three and four the motif appears in the context of triads again, although now they descend. The descending scale structure is used again here in the outer voices, though incomplete, as some pitches are absent.

By the fifth verse the "Sally" motif becomes the basis for the entire accompaniment. Long streams of rising sixths emerge from the bass and ascend into the treble, perhaps again signaling the singer's expected triumph with Sally. A scale in the bass line still remains as the underlying unit of structure, ascending during the first two phrases, and descending on the contrasting third phrase. The "Sally" motif is used for a brief commentary at the end of the song, sounding twice together in unison octaves by both hands. Perhaps this is Britten's way of suggestion the union of the two lovers.

Beethoven's melody and metric grouping are different from Britten's setting. The melody in Britten's version works neatly into an AABA' phrase structure; Beethoven's
setting makes a more significant change in the last melodic phrase as the parts line up for a fermata:

Example 3-13. Beethoven, “Sally in our alley,” mm. 16-20.""

Whether the apparent alteration⁴ in this last melodic phrase is Thomson’s or Beethoven’s is uncertain. What is significant, however, is that Beethoven very subtly crafts the opening material of the introduction from this melodic line. The song now opens with “she is the darling,” stated in the top voice of the piano:

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⁵ This assumes that Britten used a more “authentic” version of the melody. But again, with folk song, it is often difficult to document which version is more original or authentic. Both must be taken as legitimate, given that neither replicates Carey’s “original” melody.
Example 3-14. Beethoven, “Sally in our alley,” mm. 1-5\textsuperscript{46} (with annotation).

Andantino con moto grazioso e semplice assai

Britten similarly utilizes a melodic line as motivic material for his seemingly unassociated introduction. This time the phrase is the five-note figure that ascends to the singer’s high G in the first, second, and fourth melodic phrases. Britten obscures the reference not only through the rhythm, but also by transposing it up a forth. Furthermore, in the two subsequent statements he alters the ascending leap so that the second time it appears as a minor sixth, and the third time as a major third:

Example 3-15. Benjamin Britten, “Sally in our alley,” mm. 1-4 (treble staff annotated to show melodic references).

Following this statement, the top pitches of the treble staff’s descending arpeggiated seventh chords imply another line from the vocal melody, though only partially, as the

\textsuperscript{46} Beethoven, \textit{Schottische und Walisische Lieder}, 133.
final pitch of the phrase is missing. An argument could be made that the melody is completed, albeit in a modified manner and through octave displacement, in the ascending sixth "Sally" motif that first sounds at the end of the introduction at the start of measure four. Regardless, enough reference is made to the melody in this otherwise dense passage to furnish a fitting and clever introduction to the piece.

Britten's version of the vocal melody is barred differently in the first two measures of the first phrase than in the Beethoven setting, revealing an instance in which Beethoven might have been composing "blind," setting melody without being given the text. Instead of a single eighth-note pickup (which places the stress on less-important words of the text), Britten moves the barline over one beat, appropriately placing the stress on more important text choices. This also allows for the downbeat of each measure to sound the tonic pitch:

Example 3-16. Beethoven and Britten, "Sally in our Alley," mm. 4-8.\(^{47}\)

[Beethoven]

[Britten]

Beethoven's setting of this melody was one of his more successful examples in Thomson's publications.

Composed in 1819 and published by Thomson six years later, Beethoven's arrangement of "The Miller of Dee" is a poignant example of his attempts to make creative, effective settings of melodies in the absence of text. As has been discussed,

\[^{47}\text{Beethoven, Schottische und Walisische Lieder, 133. Britten, Volume 5, 4.}\]
usually a brief description of the general mood of the text accompanied the melodies
Thomson provided. Without the words, however, Beethoven was left to interpret the
melody while attempting to make it fit with Thomson’s description. In the case of “The
Miller of Dee,” the descriptive phrase accompanying the melody given to Beethoven
stated simply “The happy miller.” This must have been puzzling to the composer, as
the melody figured starkly in minor mode—far from “happy.” He compensates for this
disparity by writing a postlude, heard after each C-minor verse, which shifts to the
parallel major mode. This occurs after the harmony in minor dissipates as the flat third
scale degree (°3)—which by this point has become an understated grace note in the
piano—becomes natural in major mode. While the strings repeat Gs, the piano melody
reaches towards an almost celebratory fanfare in the upper register. Working like a
ritornello between verses, this passage serves as an appealing, although momentary
contrast before the stark return of the verse in the minor mode.

Beethoven’s setting is also one of the various examples for vocal ensemble,
featuring a trio of soprano, tenor, and bass. The soprano always has the melody, and the
tessitura of the parts is relatively high, placing the voices in a naturally dramatic timbre
for the mood of the song. Because of the presence of the trio of voices, not much
harmony is required of the accompanying instruments, and Beethoven sets their parts
with economy. Sounding frequently in unisons and octaves, the most prominent motivic
feature among the instrumental parts is a descending triplet heard regularly on the third
and sixth beats of each measure (the song is in compound duple meter), presumably
depicting the spinning of the mill wheel. First the cello and left hand of the piano play
this figure in unison during the introduction; during the verses the violin and cello play the
figure in unison octaves. The right hand of the piano has simple supporting harmonic

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"Cooper, 82-3."
material, and the left hand bounces on octaves. What results is a very dramatic, atmospheric setting.

The same description can be given to Britten’s setting, though he employs starkly different means. He sets the melody somewhat lower than others of his examples, placing it in the octave between E3 and E4. In the context of Pear’s tenor voice, perhaps this was done to give more bite to the Miller’s rejection in a “meatier” vocal range. The setting’s harmonic treatment would certainly have come under attack by any of the earlier-century folk song school adherents for its clashing harmonies. It makes an effective statement, however, with running sixteenth-notes in the right hand of the piano oscillating stepwise between the outer intervals of first a minor and then a major triad, seemingly centered in a modality on C. The melody is set, however, in A minor, making the entrance of the voice somewhat startling.⁴⁹ The melody also works out in AABA form, and Britten, unsurprisingly, moves the center of the oscillating right hand pitches higher to accommodate the rise in the melodic pitches in the third phrase. Even though the song is written out in three verses, Britten makes relatively little variation on the subsequent verses. In the middle verse the left hand of the piano, which had provided only occasional commentary in the first verse with descending fourths and fifths, now reiterates these same statements, although more emphatically, in octaves. The song effectively dissipates in the end, again much like Schubert’s Gretchen, in two measures with a written-out rallentando, the pulse slackening, and the pitch ultimately coming to rest back on the tone-center of C.

⁴⁹ The vocal entrance also seems to prove difficult for some performers, as evidenced by some instances in high-profile recordings.
3.5. Haydn and Beethoven: "Robin Adair"

There are relatively few examples of duplications between the settings of British Isles folk songs by Viennese composers. Perhaps this is simply because George Thomson was the publisher most responsible for the majority of them. One exception is the tune known as "Robin Adair." Thomson commissioned a setting from Haydn in 1801 which he published in his second volume of *Scottish Airs* after 1802. For some unknown reason, Thomson also requested a setting of the same tune from Beethoven along with two other songs in 1815, but it was never published in his collections. Perhaps the lapse of fourteen years caused him to overlook the fact that the tune had been already set (which he could have realized after Beethoven set it), or perhaps he was not satisfied with Haydn’s setting and wished it redone. The later is rather unlikely, for the simplicity of Haydn’s setting certainly must have appealed to Thomson, who favored music easily accessible to the ability levels of his purchasing public. Whatever the reason, this is one of the few examples of a duplicate melody set by both composers. Others may exist, but further exploration would be needed beyond the titles in order to discover them.

An exploration of the two composer’s settings reveals some general observations about their individual collections. Haydn’s settings, as already mentioned, are an object of simplicity. His vast output of these melodies (nearly 400 settings) over the course of roughly thirteen years suggests that they were completed at a rapid pace. That many of them are overly simple is therefore no wonder, and settings which appear “ready-made” are common. "Robin Adair," while not his most simplistic setting—the first 100 settings for William Napier are nearly all contained on one page each and feature “optional” string parts that duplicate the keyboard, if not also the melody—still shows little invention or creativity. The introduction begins with a statement borrowed from the melody, duplicated in both the violin and the right hand of the piano; the cello duplicates the single
notes of the piano's left hand. The introduction concludes in the dominant, making a pleasing transition to the entrance of the vocal melody and a return to tonic. Haydn's setting, like Beethoven's calls for ensemble voices, in this case a duet. The phrase structure of the melody, AABA', receives identical treatment between the voices in the first two phrases; the contrasting B phrase places the harmonic voice predominantly in sixths below the melody. On the melodic climax in the final phrase, the second voice is given some counterpoint against the melody, but it is very simple, stepwise motion.

The harmonic treatment of the accompaniment features mostly tonic sonorities, and Haydn fails in this setting to do anything interesting in places where some variety might otherwise be used, for example, in the third melodic phrase. He employs a secondary dominant function leading to a (V ½/IV) chord for one measure in the subdominant, but returns in the very next measure back to tonic, effectively staying there for the rest of the piece.

In some ways this song can be viewed as an exercise in skilled writing for amateurs or developing musicians. As demonstrated in the instrumental writing, simple, replicated material is given to the cello and the left-hand of the piano throughout the entire piece, with no variation. The violin, on the other hand, has the most creative lines, although the most complicated passage—a pattern in triplets—is given three times, allowing for ample opportunity to "get it right." After breaking free from doubling the right hand of the piano in the introduction, the violin begins to comment on the sung melody, becoming the most inventive with triplet rhythmic figures during the second melodic phrase. During the melodic B phrase the violin picks up a figure from the left-hand piano and cello, repeating it in a higher register. After the onset of the final melodic phrase the violin momentarily doubles the melody, returning once again to triplets, and even replicates the
bass voice of the piano for two measures during the postlude with the same figure, used in imitation:

Example 3-17. Haydn, "Robin Adair," mm. 21-28\(^5\) (showing reiteration of melodic passage in descending steps)

Granted, the simple nature of this melody must have lead both composers in setting it as one of their more basic endeavors. Beethoven also uses economy, though

finds more invention than his elder colleague. From the start of the piece the five-measure introduction reveals some of the harmonic and structural creativity that will be explored in the rest of the setting. The piece retains Haydn's setting in C Major, but the introduction features prominent use of diminished triads in the keyboard, immediately adding a level of poignancy before the entrance of the text. These sonorities all occur over a dominant pedal, which remains all throughout the first two phrases of the melody. Any resolution of dominant to tonic by this point has yet to be fulfilled.

Again this arrangement calls for vocal trio—soprano, tenor and bass—and like Beethoven's setting of "The Miller of Dee," the bulk of melodic material is given to the upper voice. The vocal and instrumental forces are carefully balanced: the voices prevail in importance during the melodic phrases, and the instruments are given significant material before and after the verse, and between vocal phrases. During the singing the piano recedes into the background, supporting with propulsive chords, accentuating the first and third beats of each measure. The strings, after keeping pace with octaves on the downbeats of the introduction, are silent until the ends of each of the first two melodic phrases, whereupon they respond with scalar passages in unison octaves.

This setting is an example of Beethoven's arrangements which make use of added material during the course of the sung verse. The second melodic phrase (over a continuing dominant pedal) is given a very quick cadence to tonic, followed by a two measure instrumental commentary which prolongs V7 / IV, implying an impending cadence to the subdominant. This occurs under a rising melodic figure in the treble of the piano, after which the varied third phrase moves temporarily to the subdominant as in Haydn's setting. But instead of the immediate and disappointing return to tonic, Beethoven utilizes an ascending third sequence by moving through an E major dominant, followed by an arrival on the submediant, and concluding with a return to the dominant
by the end of the phrase. The last phrase begins on this cadential return to tonic, which is almost triumphant. By now, the statement of tonic is desirable, having not been exhausted in any other previous part of the song. To further balance the absence of tonic in the song, the postlude—a coda heard after the last verse—features a cadence from dominant to tonic every other measure for four measures, concluding with statements during each measure for the remaining three.


One final opportunity for comparison of similar-melody folk song settings between these four composers—Haydn, Beethoven, Vaughan Williams and Britten—is found through two examples set by both Haydn and Britten. A survey of the titles of their settings reveals three similarities, though one, “O Waly, Waly,” does not share the same melody and will therefore not be discussed here. Britten’s version uses a Somerset melody collected by Cecil Sharp and has become one of his more famous settings (the melody alone, set with different text, has found its way into many modern hymnals). Haydn’s version bears some similar references in the text, but the melody is altogether different.

The melody known as “The Ash Grove” is also one of the better known and widely available folk melodies existing among various composers of folk song settings, in both solo vocal and choral settings. Roger Quilter (1877-1953) included a version in his *Arnold Book of Old Songs* that has become fairly well-known. Britten and Haydn both made arrangements, though Haydn’s version, known by the Welsh title of the tune “Llwyn onn,” uses a different text.
Just as George Thomson commissioned arrangements of his collected folk song
melodies from Europe’s leading composers, he also frequently employed Britain’s leading
poets to write alternate texts for the completed settings. Robert Burns (1759-96), Walter
Scott (1771-1832), and Lord Byron (1788-1824) were some of the most famous
contributors, though he also employed many minor poets. Composed in 1803, Haydn’s
setting of “Llwyn onn” was published as part of Thomson’s *Welsh Airs*, volume I, in
1809. This was one of several of Haydn’s folk song arrangements that were combined
with English words written by Anne Hunter (1742–1821). When Haydn visited London
in the 1790s he developed a warm friendship with Mrs. Hunter, a minor English poet and
widow of the surgeon Sir John Hunter. Their collaboration yielded two sets of English
canzonettas published between 1794–95. As Haydn was not fluent in English, Mrs.
Hunter is credited with the selection of the texts for these songs; she also wrote several of
the poems herself. Effective, varied and entertaining, they were an immediate and
enduring success.

Similar to Thomson’s dealings with Beethoven, Haydn rarely received the texts to
the songs he was asked to set. Thomson’s practice, again, was to provide numbered
melodies and a list of short descriptions with corresponding numbers. So far it is
uncertain what kind of text or description Haydn had for this melody. But whether he
had a fitting text or description, or whether Thomson or Hunter is responsible for
applying the appropriate text to Haydn’s setting, it does not exactly matter. The words
and arrangement are appropriately suited to one another.

The melody is also varied from the more traditional renderings of this tune in
settings by other composers. In his preface to volume I of the Welsh edition, Thomson
explained that occasionally he would encounter more than one version of a particular
melody, and that he selected the variant which was “the most pleasing”. Furthermore, he
explained that some of the melodies which contained "monotonous and dry repetitions" had been shortened, adapting them better for singing.\(^3\) It is presumable that Haydn's version emerged from Thomson's work in the selection and altering process he undertook as he gathered these tunes. Patterns of descending thirds in Haydn's melody frequently replace scalar passages. The result is fewer passing tones, allowing for a more straightforward, less busy, less interrupted harmonization. In the third and fourth phrase the melody arches to a high G, extending the range of the vocal line a fourth above the same place in other versions. Mrs. Hunter's text is one phrase shorter than the "Ash Grove" text; and this is accommodated in the music through an optional repeat of the first phrase. The melody now is a tri-part ABA, and Haydn balances the resultant brevity with an extended instrumental postlude that again works like a ritornello between statements of the verse.

Haydn's setting is more robust than other versions, which tend to have a meditative quality. Again this reflects his particular text. He denoted his arrangement with an Allegretto marking and set it in \(\frac{6}{8}\) meter. Haydn anticipates some of the imitation that Britten also would employ, granting more independence among the instrumental parts. The violin and cello occasionally double material in the piano, but more frequently have independent lines resulting in some effective counterpoint. The overall character of the piece, appropriately reflected by the text depicting a hunting chase, is given rhythmic drive from alternating passages in sixteenths between the various players. The effect is one of perpetual motion. This setting is the most effective of the Haydn examples explored in this context. If Haydn knew that this song would be about a hunt, he appropriately reflected this with a galloping stride in the rhythmical gestures.

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Britten’s setting was published along with his first volume of folk song arrangements in 1943. It is clear from records of his recitals with Pears in the United States during World War I that it was composed sometime by the end of 1941. This text and melody are the more familiar versions; the text tells of one who has lost his love to death, and how his environmental surroundings are reminiscent of the departed. Britten’s setting is atmospheric and evokes specific elements found in the text. The entire setting seems to derive from a reference in the last line of text, in which the singer addresses the elements which still bear a lingering remembrance of his love:

Ye echoes, O tell me, where is the sweet maiden?
She sleeps ‘neath the green turf down by the ash grove.

These “echoes” seem to be the defining idea for the material in Britten’s setting, with depictions in various ways. On the surface is a kind of canon: a simple accompaniment of two lines, mostly in tenths, rhythmically complements the melody, producing both consonances and dissonances. After the introduction, the accompaniment begins with two measures in quarter notes and then alternates between measures of quarters and eighths so that eighth-note rhythm and motion is perpetual, creating, in effect, an echo between the voice and piano. The accompaniment features both arpeggiated triadic sonorities and scalar passages so that a kind of harmonic blur also depicts the sense of cacophony present in sonic echoes. A more basic rhythmic echo sounds at the beginning of the piece during the brief introduction. The melody, which is characterized by two measures of arpeggiated triads followed by descending scalar steps, is imitated in the piano by the same pattern before the voice is heard—or is the voice imitating the idea established already by the piano? In such an echo the source voice becomes obscured. These elements are an exercise in economy, but skillfully depict the text in a very subtle manner. That Britten took his inspiration from the end of the song is a further stroke of
genius, for these distinctly characteristic compositional choices are not completely revealed until the song is over.

Whereas the Viennese composers relied on their ritornellos to bring variety to the strophic treatment of these settings, the twentieth-century composers explored strophic variation in order to bring variety their renditions. Britten retains elements of the echo in the second verse, although these drop into the background as more immediately recognizable text painting features move to the fore. The left hand of the piano is given strummed chords (anticipating the future harp and guitar folk song settings), which harmonically complement the pitches of the melody, as the right hand makes commentary on the text. As the verse speaks of warbling blackbirds, the right-hand of the piano sounds repeating, rhythmically accelerating A-flats in the upper register. Various aspects of diminishing daylight are depicted harmonically. As the text speaks of sunset in the first phrase, a countermelody (rhythmically still perpetuating the echo) gradually descends from the upper register; as the second phrase speaks of moonbeams, the counter melody in the treble staff moves into the subdued, flatter-than-possible key of F-flat major (the bass still retains the diatonic quality of the melody). As the third phrase speaks of mourning all day “in search of my love,” the right hand of the piano reaches higher and higher with a sequence of octaves leaps, eventually abandoning an unsuccessful search by chromatically wandering around the temporary harmonic root of C minor. This countermelody finally settles on E-flat, and once again returns to the descending pattern of echoes in tenths from the beginning of the song as the voice finally reveals the connection. This song contains some of the best examples of the kind of depictive and evocative material that Britten was capable of writing in setting the English language to music.
“O Can Ye Sew Cushions” also was published as part of Britten’s first volume of folk song settings. The song is in two parts, producing an AA’BB phrase structure. The two A sections form a gentle lullaby with large sweeping leaps in the melody; the B sections are characterized by a more lively statement in a contrasting $\frac{3}{4}$ meter. The tune is from Scotland, reflected by Britten with Scottish snaps in the B sections through the grace notes of the treble staff in the accompaniment. Harmonically the setting features many seconds and ninths, a mild dissonance which provides a soothing contrast to the very repetitive and static, and very diatonic melody.

Again Britten displays his brilliance with simple, effectively descriptive gestures. The lullaby is set with a two-against-three rhythmic figure that suggests rocking. But like a parent giving constancy through a lullaby to a child, the accompaniment is a two-measure idea that repeats throughout the entire first section of the piece, unchanged, from an introduction (stated twice) through the completion of the second A phrase. For a slight sense of contrast a descending bass line is implied in grace notes on every-other downbeat in the second A phrase. The beauty of this two-measure figure is that it is varied enough within itself that it does not become redundant, and it really takes closer inspection to even recognize its constant presence.

The faster B section is equally simple. Rhythmically the rocking now has accelerated to be two statements per bar, becoming almost playful, never threatening. The first B phrase features a one-measure repeated figure that becomes transposed higher in the last phrase, cadencing back to tonic at the very end. Again the harmonic choices are based on scalar passages. One notable characteristic of this folk melody is that the leading tone is absent, leaving the alternative motion from scale degree two to scale degree one (♭2 – ♯1) as the cadential figure. The material accompanying this section segments into three voices that bear significance in their relation to tonic, and similarly reiterate the B-flat to
A-flat (°2 to °1) motion. The uppermost voice (minus the grace notes) progresses in a pattern of F, G, A-flat, B-flat (°6 – 7 – °1 – °2) and concludes with the B-flat to A-flat (°2 to °1) motion. The inner voice infers the dominant, prolonging scale degree five (°5), after which it repeats F to E-flat (°6 to °5, imitating °2 to °1), finishing with F, G, A-flat (°6 – 7 – °1). The bass voice lends the most tonic stability, reiterating tonic (°1) and then establishing nearly an equal amount of time on the super-tonic (°2) before returning quickly at the end back to tonic (°1).

Example 3-18. Britten, "O can ye sew cushions?," mm. 21-28 (reductive musical example).

Additionally, the leading tone, absent from the entire melody, now features prominently in the grace note to the upper voice of the accompaniment during the first phrase. In the last phrase it becomes the top (non-grace note) voice for two measures, though it is obscured in the surrounding dissonant sonorities, as if the composer is attempting for it
not to be stated too obviously. In a subtle but secure way this leading-tone reiteration lends balance overall to the piece, and in an almost subconscious manner, coupled with the B-flat to A-flat (\(^2 - ^1\)) motion, it leads the straying sonorities back to the song’s tonic center.

Haydn’s setting of “O Can You Sew Cushions” is one of the initial songs set as a gift to help the struggling London publisher William Napier. It was included among his first 100 songs published as volume two of Napier’s Selection of Original Scots Songs in 1792. The arrangements in this volume differ from the later Haydn examples since they are settings for continuo with unrealized, figured bass. This example features a violin part more advanced than some of the others; above the melody and bass line the part includes double- and triple-stopsto as well as rapid, embellishing passages in sixteenth notes. Apart from that technical involvement, this is a very simple, straightforward setting with little harmonic surprises.

The character of the music has a stately quality which seems out of place with the lullaby in the text, and it is very certain that Haydn had little concept of it. The melody differs again from the Britten setting, once again begging the question which, if either, are original. Haydn’s melody features embellishments that are characteristic of the Classical idiom: in particular, each phrase ending is marked with either a trill, appoggiatura, or suspension. The contrasting second melodic phrase in common time looses some of the charm found in the Britten setting. The second half of each phrase places the final tonic pitch at the stronger midpoint in the bar, removing the scale degree\(^2\) to \(^1\) resolution that replicates the sighing, cooing aspect of this lullaby:
Example 3-19. Joseph Haydn, "O Can You Sew Cushions," mm. 17-25.\textsuperscript{52}

Example 3-20. Britten, "O can ye sew cushions," mm. 21-28. \(^3\)

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4. CONCLUSION

It has been the intent of this project to observe some of the techniques that make arranging an artistic compositional process. The arrangement, disowned by much of art music and folk music scholarship, has suffered from undeserved neglect. Certainly both fields have much to explore in their own fully-legitimate areas, and it is only fair to recognize that a natural cutoff exists at the boundaries of the folk song arrangement. Arguably it belongs to both field and neither at the same time. So while folk song arrangements certainly are not the most luminous examples of these composer's works, they do deserve recognition and exploration for the part they have played in the lives of those who created them, and valuable insight is discovered in the process.

Master composers, whether their motivation was monetary, conservationist, or purely artistic—or some combination of all three—have found much inspiration in exploring and creating settings of these melodies. Their voluminous output speaks for itself, with nearly one-thousand settings between the small number of composers mentioned in these pages. These examples have demonstrated various methods of composition, a process of choosing musical material based on pre-designated criteria and giving it order and form. In the case of the folk song arrangement, the parameters for their choice in compositional material had been set by at least two factors—the melody with its text, and the intended audience. Most obviously, the melody provides structure on various levels, but the mark of compositional excellence is demonstrated through the choices made in favoring specific material over another. Harmony, for example, can be easily implied by a melody. Important structural melodic moments require a supporting harmony, and Western art music has provided a vocabulary with proscriptions on how to accomplish this. Some of the more basic Haydn settings—especially the early
examples—demonstrate fairly predictable choices. As he produced more arrangements, Haydn exhibited more creativity, especially in the instrumental interludes between verses. Beethoven succeeded in finding originality and artistic expression with his settings of these melodies, but even the most obscure musical material can in most instances be related to some motif extracted from the melody. Like the later Haydn settings, his most fertile ground was his “original” accompanying material, the instrumental introductions, interludes and postludes. Beethoven further revealed his genius by creating settings that evoke the text, even without having the specific text at his disposal. And by exploring interesting harmonic choices over pedal points, contrasts through modal shifts, progressions utilizing chromaticism, in addition to the clever motivic elements, Beethoven revealed that these settings were not merely “hack work,” as is often suggested, but a creative outlet to which he applied his usual high standard.

Britten’s settings utilized his own, unique harmonic vocabulary. Often with skilled economy of means he found structural devices that were extracted from the melodies and which were inspired by the texts, applications that on the surface seemed random at times, but altogether lifted the status of these otherwise simple arrangements into the realm of true art music. As abstract as Britten’s settings may seem, they do honor basic structural elements, such as phrase endings, by coinciding motivic material or pertinent harmonic elements with important places in the melody.

The manner in which these composers dealt with cadence points has been a worthy exploration. Most of these melodies imply some sort of cadence with motion that returns to the tonic pitch (scale degree 1) at important phrase endings, most significantly in the final phrase. Haydn and occasionally Beethoven recognize these occurrences with dominant-tonic cadences; Vaughan Williams and Britten made unique choices while trying to obscure—or avoid altogether—the dominant-tonic reference.
Their most significant issue tended to be finding ways to give a sense of finality in the absences of any observance of diatonic polarity. Tonic prolongation through pedals, avoidance of leading tones, bass line motion by steps, and motivic reiteration were some of the methods they used to bring variety and originality to their settings in order to avoid what may have seemed like harmonic clichés in their twentieth-century context.

Vaughan Williams was the master who occupied a position in the middle, being both the collector as well as the composer. As such his place was one of dual loyalties, and his arrangements reflect that. His are the most obvious in their attempt to promote the melody, and are the most blatant in their endeavor to stay within the proscribed boundaries set by the melodic mode. His settings try to maintain the tone of the text. But also, because of his unique position, his examples attempt to retain somewhat of the “heart and soul” of the melody as he discovered it, relayed on to him by some elderly rural singer. There are instances in which he demonstrated harmony with references to Western tonal music in a diatonic context, but mostly his harmonic treatments are non-syntactic. Consequently, he accomplishes simplicity with stationary bass lines (or slow, steady movement) resulting in pedals while movement in the melody is supported with consonances in upper voices. His settings avoid prominent use of composed material; rather, he produced brief, understated connective harmonic progressions that lend a sense of flow between verses. Among his folk song collecting contemporaries he no doubt received criticism for taking these melodies too far from their source; not more than a generation later he received equal criticism for not taking them far enough. In his hands these songs are in part an homage by a conservationist, and yet subtle aspects of his genius as an artistic and original composer emerge. He was the most adventurous with his choral works, understandable for their more visible role in concert performances.
This, then, is the other compositional boundary set on these pieces, so basically obvious that it is often easy to overlook. They were not only artistic musings, or the compositional expression of creative genius. All had a function, a purpose, for their very existence. The Viennese models were meant to be consumable by a public with very specific and often limiting technical abilities, an aspect with which Beethoven struggled to comply; judging from his examples, Haydn went along with the reality of these limitations more willingly. He most certainly did not possess Beethoven’s indomitable artistic spirit, desperate for self-expression and recognition. Haydn occupies an unfortunate position reflected by these particular settings, for they do not adequately display his genius. But this does not seem to bother him. Possibly because of his age; possibly because of his station in life, having already established his fame and international reputation; possibly also because he was paid handsomely for his efforts. Nonetheless, it is clear that he found great pleasure through his work on these pieces. In a letter written near the end of his collaboration with Thomson, he declared, in large capital letters, MI VANTI DE QUESTO LAVORO (“I am proud of this work.”)

Britten’s settings reflect their intended audience as well. First and foremost they were written for the very expressive abilities of the most intimate audience—himself, and his lifelong collaborator and partner, Peter Pears. As concert pieces for the pair to perform, there had to be a level of personal appeal for both in these settings, or certainly they would not have elected to repeatedly perform them, thereby granting these creations the life span with which to gain such notoriety. Beyond their own enjoyment as performers, there was a desire to please an audience. But to be fully understood, these pieces must be placed in their context, as compositions for performers with whom the composer was intimately acquainted.
There is definitely pleasure taken in the reality that these works are beginning to come forward out of their obscurity. In the past decade, scholarship has begun to increase, albeit slightly. The most telling sign is that complete works editions in recorded form are beginning to document all of these pieces. In the mid-1990s two important CD recordings were made of the Britten folk songs, one of which includes several unpublished arrangements, his reworkings for choirs, as well as several orchestrations.44 In 1997 volume seventeen of the Complete Beethoven Edition was released, which included seven discs encompassing his complete folk song settings.55 Most recently, an effort to record the larger, complete edition of Haydn’s settings has been undertaken. This enormous project in six volumes is due for completion in 2009.56

Vaughan Williams’s complete folk song settings suffer the largest neglect, quite ironic for the man who was the most loyal to this genre of all these composers. Perhaps the greatest offense is that publications of his settings are no longer in print and are difficult to come by. Despite some thorough cataloging and annotating of his works in research guides and other published sources, his complete output is yet to be fully explored and understood for its impact in his aesthetic. Some works have been thoroughly recorded, yet others suffer from serious neglect and deserve to be heard and explored and rediscovered. One hopes that the day will not be long before they also emerge out of obscurity.

Settings of folk songs continue to play an important role in the repertoires of solo and ensemble vocalists. Many settings of folk songs exist, and many more are appearing. There is an aspect of choral literature that seems to thrive on folk song arrangements; just as Vaughan

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Williams discovered, choral ensembles and their audiences continue to appreciate effective settings of folk melodies. New publications are also emerging of folk song arrangements for solo voices with piano. Some of these are well-crafted compositions, and display similar attributes discovered through this study; others seem to take the unfortunate position that simple folksong melodies can survive with uninspiring accompaniments. It is true that there is inherent beauty in these melodies alone, but they are better left that way than dressed with thoughtless arrangements.

Finally, it is worth exploring why these melodies and their arrangements have such appeal. Is there truly some power intrinsic to the melodies themselves, as Vaughan Williams experienced upon discovering "Bushes and Briars"? Some examples certainly have been elevated to a mystical realm. One of Vaughan Williams's singers, perhaps reacting to the difficulty with which the composer labored to record his selection, commented that if Vaughan Williams were to learn the words, "the Almighty would teach him the tunes." Such anecdotes perhaps are responsible for hyperbole in a zeal to understand and appreciate the beauty of these folk songs. Whether or not they themselves possess some innate power to reach our souls must be left to personal conjecture.

Like an ancient artifact or a museum piece, there is a certain allure in a melody from folk origins. As we examine it, we can easily become preoccupied with unanswerable questions: who wrote it? why was it written? and what were the people like who found purpose and delight in its expression? Thus the attraction to these melodies comes out of the wonder they can inspire. Certainly there is also a charm inherent for their association with another age, an age now idealized for its perceived simplicity, and untainted by modernity.

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17 Palmer, 27.
What is perhaps more valuable in understanding the appeal of folk song melodies is the reality that human sensibilities find pleasure in that which is recognizable. There is certainly something appealing in the recognition of a melody, whether its familiarity is real or imagined, as was the case with Vaughan Williams and "Bushes and Briars." Folk song melodies characteristically have in their simplicity an element of the familiar. And when an object bears a combination of the familiar with historical significance in a work that also demonstrates creative artistry, innovation, and imagination, the result is a product with multiple layers of appeal. Such is the attraction of the folk song arrangement. When the familiar folk melody is coupled with the expressive depth of an arrangement, the resultant masterpiece in miniature acquires a charm all its own, and delights with its new surroundings. We continue to value these melodies as we come to recognize them each time they are rediscovered. They deserve to be performed, studied, and welcomed into the body of well-recognized and appreciated works by these composers.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES

Comparative Tables of the Various Publications of Folk Songs
Arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams

At the time the research for this project was completed there were adequate listings available of the folk song arrangements by Haydn,\(^9\) Beethoven,\(^9\) and Britten.\(^9\) Such was not the case with those by Vaughan Williams. While thorough, annotated listings of his complete works are available, particularly in Michael Kennedy’s *Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), no single source lists the folk song arrangements as separate entities and clarifies their multiple settings. The following tables are an attempt to represent his contributions to folk song settings under one source.

**TABLE 1: Vaughan Williams’s Folk Song Arrangements Appearing in Published Collections**

96 individual melodies in the following publications set in arrangements, with 80 unique settings for solo voices:

- fifteen melodies “collected and set with an accompaniment by RVW”

- eleven melodies collected and arranged by RWV


• collected by W. Percy Merrick; fourteen of fifteen songs arr. RVW

• eight arr. RVW (others arr. Cecil Sharp)

• melodies collected by Maud Karpeles; fifteen of the thirty settings are by RVW

• contains three songs collected and arranged by RVW which appear in other publications (Folk-Songs from the Eastern Counties and Folk-Songs for Schools.)

• arranged for voice and violin by RVW

Six English Folk-Songs. London: Oxford University Press, 1935
• arranged for voice and piano by RVW

• sixteen melodies arranged for women’s voices and orchestra (opt. piano)

• posthumous publication; melodies only, selected and edited by RVW and A. L. Lloyd

• edited by Ursula Vaughan Williams and Imogen Holst; all arrangements are by Imogen Holst

• arr. RVW in 1938, given to Maud Karpeles. All appeared originally in Folk Songs from Newfoundland
**TABLE 2: Chronological List of Publications of Individual Folk Songs for Ensemble Voices**

20 settings for mixed voices (SATB); 14 settings for male voices; 16 settings for women's voices (*Folk Songs of the Four Seasons*)

### 1908
- **The Jolly Ploughboy**  
  male voices (TTBB), unaccompanied
- **Bushes and Briars**  
  male voices (TTBB), unaccompanied

### 1912
- **Down Among the Dead Men**  
  male voices (TTBB), unaccompanied
- **The Spanish Ladies**  
  solo voice and pianoforte
- **Alister McApine’s Lament**  
  mixed voices (SATB), unaccompanied
- **The Winter is Gone**  
  male voices (TTBB), unaccompanied
- **Ward the Pirate**  
  mixed chorus (SATB) and small orchestra (unpublished)
  male voices (TTBB), unaccompanied
- **Tarry Trowsers**  
  mixed chorus (SATB) and small orchestra (unpublished)
- **And All in the Morning**  
  mixed chorus (SATB) and small orchestra (unpublished)

### 1913
- **Mannin Veen (Dear Mona)**  
  mixed chorus (SATB), unaccompanied
- **Five English Folk Songs**  
  mixed chorus (SATB), unaccompanied
- Published collectively and individually:
  - **The dark-eyed sailor**  
    also for unison accompanied song
  - **The springtime of the year**
  - **Just as the tide was flowing**  
    also for unison accompanied song
  - **The lover’s ghost, or Well met, my owm true love**
  - **Wassail song**

### 1919
- **Jack the Sailor**  
  male voices (TTBB) with optional accompaniment
- **We be three poor mariners**  
  male voices (TTB), unaccompanied
- **The Golden Vanity**  
  "arr for unison and mixed voices"
- **Just as the tide was flowing**  
  "arr for unison and mixed voices"
- **The Spanish Ladies**  
  "arr for unison and mixed voices"

### 1920
- **The Turtle Dove**  
  male voices (TBB) with pianoforte accompaniment
  *ad lib*
1921
The Mermaid soprano solo and mixed chorus (SATB), unaccompanied, or unison with pianoforte accompaniment
The Farmer's Boy male voices (TTBB), unaccompanied
Loch Lomond male voices (TTBB) with baritone solo, unaccompanied
A Farmer's Son So Sweet male voices (TBB) with pianoforte accompaniment ad lib; also for mixed voices (SSATBB), unaccompanied (?)

1922
Ca' the Yowes tenor solo and mixed chorus (SATB), unaccompanied

1923
The Seeds of Love male voices (TBB), with pianoforte ad lib

1924
The Turtle Dove mixed voices (SSATB) with baritone solo
Bushes and Briars mixed voices (SATB), unaccompanied

1931
Loch Lomond mixed voices (SSATB), unaccompanied

1934
An Acre of Land male voices (TTBB) with pianoforte accompaniment ad lib; also for mixed voices (SATB), unaccompanied; also as unison song with pianoforte accompaniment from Folk Songs of the Four Seasons
John Dory mixed voices (SATB), unaccompanied
The Ploughman male voices (TTBB) with pianoforte accompaniment ad lib
The Turtle Dove unison with pianoforte accompaniment (also with orchestra: fl, cl, 2 hn, hrp, strings)
TABLE 3: Vaughan Williams’s Folk Songs Set for Mixed Voices, also Published as Solo Songs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Source Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Acre of Land</td>
<td>unison from <em>Folk Songs of the Four Seasons</em>. Oxford, 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TTBB London, Oxford University Press, 1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SATB London, Oxford University Press, 1934; Oxford Folk Songs series, F.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushes and Briars</td>
<td><em>Folk Songs from the Eastern Countries</em> (Folk Songs of England, Book II, 1908) no. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TTBB Novello &amp; Co., 1908, <em>The Orpheus</em> new series, no. 447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SATB a capella Novello &amp; Co., 1924, Novello’s Part-song Book, 2nd series, no. 1416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dark-eyed Sailor</td>
<td>Unison Accompanied Song. Stainer &amp; Bell’s Unison Songs (no. 141) (1935)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SATB div. a capella Stainer &amp; Bell Choral Library No. 129 (1920)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jolly Ploughboy</td>
<td><em>Folk Songs II</em>, no. 18; also in <em>Folk Songs for Schools</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TTBB London, Novello &amp; Co.; New York, the H.W. Gray Co., 1908 in <em>The Orpheus</em>, new series, no. 448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s voices <em>Folk Songs of the Four Seasons</em> (Oxford University Press, 1950)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just as the Tide was Flowing</td>
<td>Unison Song with accompaniment. London, Stainer &amp; Bell (1919) (S&amp;B 2121); also as <em>Sea Songs</em> for unison and mixed voices, no. 3 in <em>Motherland Song Book</em> vol. iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SATB a capella S&amp;B Choral Library no. 130 (1920)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lover’s Ghost</td>
<td><em>Folk Songs from Newfouldland</em>, vol. ii, no. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SATB a capella S&amp;B Choral Library no. 131 (1920)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ploughman</td>
<td><em>Six English Folk Songs</em>, no. 2; also, <em>Penguin Book of English Folk Songs</em>, 1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TTBB London, Oxford University Press, 1934. OCS, no. 639</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Seeds of Love  
*Folk Songs of England, v: Folk Songs from Sussex* (London: Novello, 1912) no. 11

**TTB**
London, Stainer & Bell Ltd. (1923) in Stainer & Bell’s Male Voice Choir no. 83 (S&B 2098)

Tarry Trowsers  
*Folk Songs from the Eastern Countries* (Folk Songs of England, Book II, 1908) no. 2

**SATB & Orch**
Unpublished: British Library MS 71484

The Turtle Dove
unison with piano accompaniment.  J. Curwen, 1934

**TBB**
Curwen & Sons, 1919

**SSATB a capella**
J. Curwen & Sons (1924)

The Unquiet Grave  

**SSA**  
*Folk Songs of the Four Seasons* (‘Autumn’), 1950

Ward the Pirate  
*Folk Songs from the Eastern Countries* (Folk Songs of England, Book II, 1908) no. 9; also in *Folk Songs II*, no. 32

**TTBB**
J. Curwen & Sons, 1912, The Apollo Club Series, no. 518)

**SATB & Orch**
Unpublished: British Library MS 71484
**TABLE 4: Folk Song Melodies Appearing only as Choral Settings:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Melody Title</th>
<th>Arrangement</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alistair McAlpine’s Lament</td>
<td>SATB a capella</td>
<td>London, J. Curwen &amp; Sons, 1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And All in the Morning</td>
<td>SATB &amp; Orch</td>
<td>Unpublished: British Library MS 71484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ca’ the Yowes</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>London, J. Curwen &amp; Sons, 1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down Among the Dead Men</td>
<td>TTBB</td>
<td>London, Joseph Williams Ltd, 1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Farmer’s Boy</td>
<td>TTBB a capella</td>
<td>London, Stainer &amp; Bell, 1921. also Stainer &amp; Bell’s Male Voice Choir Library no. 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TBB</td>
<td>Stainer &amp; Bell’s Male Voice Library no. 78a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Farmer’s Son So Sweet</td>
<td>TBB</td>
<td>London, Stainer &amp; Bell, 1923. also Stainer &amp; Bell’s Male Voice Choir no. 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SSATBB</td>
<td>Stainer &amp; Bell’s Choral Library no. 215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Golden Vanity</td>
<td>Unison and Mixed Voices</td>
<td><em>Motherland Song Book, IV</em>, no. 1. Stainer &amp; Bell, 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Germany</td>
<td>Male Voices</td>
<td>from Sharp’s <em>Folk Songs of England</em>, i (Novello)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London, Stainer &amp; Bell, 1932. S&amp;B’s Male Voice Choir no. 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just as the tide was flowing</td>
<td>Unison and Mixed Voices</td>
<td><em>Motherland Song Book, IV</em>, no. 3. Stainer &amp; Bell, 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack the Sailor</td>
<td>TTBB</td>
<td><em>Motherland Song Book III</em>, no. 6. Stainer &amp; Bell, 1919</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loch Lomond  
   TTBB a capella  London, Stainer & Bell, 1921. also S&B’s Male Voice Choir Library no. 79  
   SSATB a capella  London, Stainer & Bell, 1931. also S&B’s Choral Library, no. 262  

Mannin Veen (Dear Mona)  
   SATB a capella  London, J. Curwen & Sons Ltd. *(The Choir Handbook)*  

The Mermaid  
   SATB  London, Stainer & Bell, 1921; Stainer & Bell’s Choral Library no. 168  

The Spanish Ladies  
   Unison & Mixed Voices in *Motherland Song Book*, iv, no. 9 (Stainer & Bell, 1919?)  

The Springtime of the Year  
   SATB  Stainer & Bell Choral Library no. 129, 1920  

Wassail Song  
   SATB  *Five English Folk Songs* Freely arranged for unaccompanied mixed chorus. London, Stainer & Bell (1913). also Stainer & Bell Choral Library no. 132  
   Unison Voices with Descant and orchestral accompaniment in *Folk Songs of the Four Seasons* (Oxford University Press, 1950)  

We be three poor mariners  
   TTB  *Motherland Song Book III*, no. 8. Stainer & Bell, 1919  

The Winter is Gone  
   TTBB a capella  London, Novello / NY, H.W. Gray, 1912; also in *The Orpheus*, a collection of glees and part songs for male voices, new series no. 536
### TABLE 5: Complete Alphabetical List of the Folk Song Arrangements by Vaughan Williams for Voices and their Publications, Including their Various Multiple Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Bold Young Farmer</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>FSEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Farmer’s Son So Sweet</td>
<td>SSATBB</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>S&amp;K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Farmer’s Son So Sweet</td>
<td>TBB</td>
<td>1921 (1923)</td>
<td>S&amp;K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alister McAlpine’s Lament</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>JCur&amp;Sons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Acre of Land</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>OUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Acre of Land</td>
<td>TBB, with piano (ad lib)</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>OUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Acre of Land</td>
<td>unison female voices &amp; orch (or piano)</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>FS4S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And All in the Morning</td>
<td>SATB and orchestra</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>unpub.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As I Walked Out</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>FSEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloody Gardener, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>FS/NF, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold “Princess Royal”, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>FSEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold “Princess Royal”, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>FS, II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold General Wolfe</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>FS/Sax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonny Banks of Virgie-o, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>FS/NF, II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewer, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>6EFS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushes and Briars</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>N&amp;Co</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushes and Briars</td>
<td>TBB</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>N&amp;Co</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushes and Briars</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>FSEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ca’ the Yowes</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>JCur&amp;Sons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Grant</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>FS/Sax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain’s Apprentice, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>FSEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter, The</td>
<td>unison voices with piano</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>FS/Sch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>FS, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>SCFS, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Christmas Song</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>FS/S4S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(We’ve Been awhile)</td>
<td>SATB</td>
<td>1954 (1963)</td>
<td>3GS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come Let us Gather Cockles</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>FS/NF, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruel Mother, The</td>
<td>unison voices with piano</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>FS/Sch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuckoo and the Nightingale, The</td>
<td>Female voices and orch (or piano)</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>FS/S4S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuckoo, The</td>
<td>voice and piano</td>
<td>1934</td>
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Notes for Table 5:
- Most mixed voice settings were intended by the composer to be sung unaccompanied. Any other indication is noted.
- Date given is the date of composition with date of publication in parenthesis, if different.

Abbreviations of Collection Titles and Publishers:

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