

**THE SONGS OF GERALD FINZI (1901-1956)**

**TO POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY**

by

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## SUMMARY

This study consists of two volumes. **Volume II** contains the analysis of fifty-one songs by Gerald Finzi (1901-1956) to poems by Thomas Hardy (1840-1928). The analysis is based on a preconceived model which focuses on a critical examination of the texts and considers the basic elements of music in each song. Certain stylistic features are apparent from this study and are reflected in **Volume I**. After a biographical sketch of each artist and a discussion of the texts, a sample of the analysis is presented. The basic elements of music are then discussed: timbre, duration, pitch organization, dynamics, texture, structure, mood and atmosphere. **Volume I** concludes with a general statement on the stylistic features of the composer and considers the artists' genius in the light of the study.

Finzi's setting of such a comparatively large number of Hardy poems is a result of the former's intense interest in English literature and sympathy with much of Hardy's personal philosophies such as the uselessness of suffering which fills an indifferent world. Finzi's settings are firmly embedded in tonal traditions but he explores a great variety of subtle atmospheres within the confines of tonality. The declamation of the texts is of superior quality and the composer achieves an individual language of expression unparalleled in the song-writing of the first half of the twentieth century in England.

## SAMEVATTING

Hierdie studie beslaan twee volumes. **Volume II** behels die analise van een-en-vyftig liedere van Gerald Finzi (1901-1956) na tekste van Thomas Hardy (1840-1928). Die analises is gebaseer op 'n vooraf ontwerpte model op grond waarvan die tekste krities geëvalueer, en die basiese musikale elemente bestudeer is. Sekere stilistiese tendense wat uit hierdie studie blyk, word in **Volume I** weergegee.

Ná 'n kort biografiese skets van beide kunstenaars en 'n bespreking van die tekste, word 'n uittreksel van die analise aangebied. Hierna volg 'n ondersoek na die basiese elemente van musiek: toonkleur, toonduur, toonhoogte, toonstrekke, tekstuur, struktuur en die skep van atmosfeer. **Volume I** sluit af met 'n samevatting van die stylkenmerke en 'n slotbeskouing van beide kunstenaars se geniale bydrae.

Finzi se toonsetting van 'n relatief groot aantal gedigte van Hardy spruit uit sy intense belangstelling in die Engelse letterkunde en sy vereenselwiging met die persoonlike filosofieë van Hardy - veral die gedagte van onnodige lyding in 'n apatiese wêreld. Finzi toonset hoofsaaklik in 'n tonale styl, maar ondersoek 'n groot verskeidenheid delikate atmosfeerskeppinge binne die tonale raamwerk. Sy deklamering van tekste is van hoogstaande gehalte en die komponis bring 'n persoonlike uitdrukkingsvorm, ongeëwenaar in die liederkuns van die eerste helfte van die twintigste eeu in Engeland, tot stand.

I am not attempting to be a composer. I am trying to reveal a state I think is missing in the today's world (except, perhaps, in private): a certain state of surrender: surrender to an ongoing harmony in the universe that exists with or without us. Let us let it in.

Keith Jarrett

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## PREFACE

One of the most common metaphors for creativity is that of "spark": an electric leap of thought from one place to a remote one, without any apparent justification beforehand, but with all the justification in the world after the fact. Besides being used as a noun, "spark" is also used as a verb: one idea *sparks* another. Creative mental activity becomes, in this imagery, a set of sparks flying around in a space of concepts....Human thoughts have a way of slipping easily along certain conceptual dimensions into other thoughts, and resisting such slippage along other dimensions. A given idea has slightly different slippabilities - predispositions to slip - in each different human mind that it comes to live in. Yet some minds' slippabilities seem to give rise to what we consider genuine creativity, while others' do not. What is this precious gift? Is there a formula to the creative act? Can spark and slippability be canned and bottled? In fact isn't that just what the human brain is - an encapsulated creativity machine? Or is there more to creativity and mind than can ever be encapsulated in any finite physical object? (Douglas Hofstadter *Metamagical Themas* 1985:173)

The debate on the origins and process of "genuine creativity" and "genius" has been perpetuated through the ages and will continue a good while longer, at least until substantial progress is made in the fields of cognitive science, neurology, psychology and other related disciplines. At the same time artists and art critics have felt themselves competent to pronounce value judgements about all art forms, including music, and have proceeded to classify artists as geniuses, second rate or mere craftsman. Many classifications have become rigid and generally accepted. Few, for example, will argue about the genius of Bach, Mozart or Beethoven. Very soon, however, a comparative notion of genius arises and arguments in favour of Liszt but against Chopin (or vice versa) will be inevitable.

To contemplate and allow for the genius of a musician working in a confined space and in an individual language, requires a serious shift of perspective, especially in the twentieth century with so many diverse stylistic trends demanding attention. We experience a sense of expectation and anticipation at the end of the twentieth century similar to that at the end of the nineteenth. The genius of Gerald Finzi was shaped by this expectation, allied to uncertainty, devastation and an intense longing for the purer, better old times. Couple these large-scale human perceptions with unusually traumatic tragedy, a largely private education and a relatively short, intense existence and the cards for a rare and individual genius have been dealt. Finzi is an underrated genius whose music radiates restrained serenity, gentle pathos and an unperturbed longing for the past. Similar emotions were found in the poems of a genius whom he never met of whom he felt himself to be a soul-mate, Thomas Hardy. Hardy is another original mind whose true value is too seldom recognised or who has been simply cast as an 'atheist novelist' of some note.

The Hardy-Finzi connection, however, gives us a new insight into the nature of genius. One has to agree (to use Hofstadter's analogy) that Finzi's mind 'slipped' into Hardy's with an ease which was quite unusual. This

particular slippability created a new 'spark' of undeniable genius which places both artists in the ranks of the most significant in England in the first half of this century.

### Motivation

The first time I came into contact with the music of Gerald Finzi was as a thirteen-year-old clarinet student, who had just made peace with the bridge and the upper register, and was given the *Carol* (from *Five Bagatelles for Clarinet and Piano*) to prepare as a concert piece. I remember thinking to myself: if this is what twentieth century music sounds like, it cannot be too bad. How wrong I was, but how I loved that piece! This took place in the heat of the Far Northern Transvaal, Republic of South Africa, in the mid nineteen-seventies, but it is true to say that the *Carol* and some of the other sections that I played later, (*Prelude, Forlana* and *Romance*) are directly responsible for this study. I was in due course appalled to discover Finzi described as a 'minor' British composer and dismayed to realise that hardly anyone in this country knew of the existence of this composer. The seeds of my mission were sown.

My introduction to Thomas Hardy was at the age of about seventeen, in the form of the poem, "Drummer Hodge" (*Poems of the Past and the Present* (1901) subsection, *Poems of War and Patriotism*). It is a very popular choice as a prescribed poem for Matriculation English Literature because of its South African setting (Nobody who is unfamiliar with the Karoo can truly understand to what "kopje crest" and "broad Karoo" refer). During my three-year course of English Literature at the University of Pretoria, I came to know Hardy more extensively, and became acquainted with the sombre aspect of much of what he wrote. I was drawn by his realism in development of character and his use of innovative language in his novels.

When the time came to consider a topic for this present study, there was no alternative in my mind to the music of Gerald Finzi and, great was my delight after a preliminary investigation, to learn that Finzi loved Hardy's poetry. If this did not convince me, the following words from the preface to Finzi's own catalogue of works, entitled *Absolom's Palace*, did:

As it happens, it is likely that new ideas, new fashions, and the pressing forward of new generations will soon obliterate my small contribution. Yet I like to think in each generation may be found a few responsive minds. To shake hands with a good friend over the centuries is a pleasant thing, and the affection which an individual may retain after his departure is perhaps the only thing which guarantees an ultimate life to his work. (Quoted from a programme note to a recording of *Dies Natalis* by Gerald Finzi's eldest son, Christopher 1964)

To complete the picture for myself, I wanted to meet Christopher Finzi and see the family home in

Ashmansworth. And so I did. In July 1994, during a short trip to England, I made contact with Mr Finzi and was kindly invited to supper. The article which follows contains my impressions (quoted from *Ars Nova - Unisa Musica* Vol 27 1995:144-8):

Ashmansworth, more particularly Church Farm, just over a couple of miles south of Newbury, Berkshire, is the place where Gerald Finzi (1901-56) spent the last thirty years of his life. Most of his mature works were written here, where he found security amidst an acute awareness "of his own fragile and uncertain life". He wrote these words in the preface to his own catalogue of works, but they must not be taken to have overshadowed his every existence. Building the homestead on Church Farm, bringing into existence an apple orchard of over 400 trees, collecting and editing manuscripts of many so-called minor English composers, collecting an enormous library of books not to mention numerous musical activities, all give but a glimpse of an active all-rounded man with a wide range of interests.

I recently visited this magical place to have a conversation with the oldest son of Gerald and Joy Finzi, who had recently turned sixty (making him twenty-two when his father died). Mr and Mrs Christopher Finzi kindly invited me to supper and we spent a couple of hours discussing his father's music, composing procedures, interests, and the mystery surrounding the delay of any substantial biography appearing. We spent most of the splendid evening in the garden overlooking the same valley that initially had drawn Gerald Finzi to this particular spot. Of the apple orchard only a few huge trees were left. Christopher said that his enthusiastic and conservation-conscious father had at the time been oblivious of the fact that the area was not particularly suitable for apple growing. The ones that were left were those indigenous to Berkshire.

I started cautiously, inquiring after the proposed biography by Diana MacVeagh. A rather long, unhappy tale followed. Diana MacVeagh had acquired permission from the family and Finzi Trust in as early as 1957 to undertake the task of researching, in close connection with Joy Finzi, all available material to write a comprehensive biography. Progress was slow, but apparently methodical and very complete. After twenty years, Christopher received the manuscript for proof reading and approval. He gave nothing but praise for what he saw. Mrs MacVeagh then took back the manuscript and indicated that she was not prepared to publish yet. She intended doing a complete analysis of the music as well. Since the eighties there has been a backward and forward tussle to get the manuscript to the publishers, but to no avail. Over the last ten years it has become clear, to all parties concerned, that for some or other reason, be it psychological or practical, Mrs MacVeagh is not prepared to hand over the manuscript for publication. The family and Finzi Trust has commissioned Stephen Banfield to undertake the task of writing a new biography. Christopher, obviously appreciating this new effort, lamented the fact that the MacVeagh document seems irretrievably lost because he deemed it to be both extremely insightful as well as entirely comprehensive.

Our conversation drifted to Thomas Hardy. Why had he been such an important character in Finzi's life? Why so many songs on Hardy texts? Christopher noted that although their lives had overlapped by some twenty years, the two men had never met. Finzi wrote, himself: "I have always loved him so much and from the earliest days have responded, not so much to an influence, as a kinship with him. (I don't mean a kinship with his genius, alas, but with his mental make-up)." Like Hardy, Finzi detested the useless and unnecessary suffering that fills the world. Christopher reiterated that his father had had an unhappy childhood and a lonely young adulthood. This changed dramatically when he met and shortly married Joy. He spoke fervently of his mother, a positive person, full of life and with a great sense of humour. She kept a daily journal of their entire married life, which has been invaluable to scholarly study. He also praised her for the amicable bearing of thirty years of widowhood. Christopher drew a parallel of an inverted sort between Hardy's and Finzi's married lives: "My father came from the shadows into the sunlight while with Hardy it seems to be the other way around." Hardy's ever-more-strained relationship with his first wife Emma, caused him considerable pain and left him with feelings of guilt at her death in 1912, in spite of his marriage to Florence in 1914. Finzi, then, feeling a kinship with Hardy, could set in excess of fifty poems, from his position in "the sunlight". Finzi furthermore believed, that Hardy, in spite of the gloom of much of his writing, always clung to something positive even right to the very end.

As a matter of interest I enquired after Finzi's musical taste. Which composers' music had he liked? The answer was somewhat surprising: "In contrast to my father's own style of writing, which deliberately leans towards the tonal, he was very fond of the more dissonant and even atonal music of Stravinsky, Bartok and Berg. He also had a deep reverence for French music especially by Faure and Ravel, but not Debussy." The Bach influence is also a very strong one as is vividly apparent in the two Arias from *Dies Natalis* and *Farewell to Arms*. Closer to home, Christopher mentioned various composers, including Howell, Vaughan-Williams and Kenneth Leighton, the latter a quite remarkable young man in Finzi's estimation, with "a magical musical mind". Christopher made a point of mentioning that his father had not been fond of Britten's music.

Getting back to Finzi's own style I quoted Banfield (1984:279) and asked for a response: "One of the limitations of Finzi's view of art is that it makes no direct attempt at originality. There is no striving to grasp the new, the as yet unexpressed." The reaction was: What is originality? Isn't the process of composition linked to the individual's musical language? We do not criticize French or Spanish as being more or less original, than any other language. Why criticize Finzi's language, as such? Rather criticize what he has done with his language! What Christopher found remarkable in his father's music is that, in spite of its apparent conventionality, at large it is intensely individual and can not be easily mistaken for any one else's music. Now isn't that the harder path towards originality? (I wondered quietly to myself.) He said furthermore that his father believed that the best music written was that which had a healthy balance between feeling and reason, between mind and emotion. These must be considered in equal proportions. I also asked about direct symbolism in the setting of words to music. To this Christopher answered that his father actually disliked the idea of trying to copy animal or other natural sounds in his music. This does not mean that it never occurs for there is a striking example in what was to become the *Requiem da Camera's* orchestral introduction of a direct reference to the Last Post, in the low register of the flute. Finzi valued a more general atmosphere setting of the text through a combination of musical elements.

To a question on inspiration and work procedure, Christopher answered that his father had often been inspired in a flash, but that these inspirations had seldom been complete. These sketches would then be put away, sometimes for a very long time (as long as twenty years in isolated cases) and he would return to them for completion. Occasionally he would read or work through an incomplete work at night before he went to bed and would wake up the next morning and complete the work, the solution presumably found subconsciously during the period of sleep. He also said that his father had had a strong tendency towards the contemplative mood and in a larger scale work he would mostly start with the second or slow contemplative movement. Hence the *Eclogue*, the only complete movement from an intended piano concerto for piano and string orchestra, which Christopher, in collaboration with Howard Ferguson and Joy Finzi, prepared for publication and performance in 1957. These serene contemplative statements, usually fairly brief, are at the heart of Finzi's power of expression.

As the evening faded, we went inside and listened to extracts from the memorial service held in a church nearby, at the event of Joy Finzi's death three years earlier. Many friends had attended to pay tribute and a number of songs had been sung by Stephen Varcoe. Just before we had supper on the verandah, I noticed the three-quarter grand Blüthner. Finzi was very fond of this piano and most of his sketching was done on it.

"You can only see the valleys from the hills", Christopher quoted Verdi, meaning that his father could only write so many contemplative and sombre works because he himself had worked through such a period in his life successfully, and although he was not allowed more time to round it all off, we have a lot to be thankful for in terms of what he did achieve.  
[Friday 15 July 1994]

## METHODOLOGY

To clarify the structure, purpose and aim of this study, it is necessary to comment on the procedure which has been followed.

Having first surveyed the body of vocal music by Gerald Finzi, it soon became clear that the entire volume would be too bulky for a single study and that the topic would have to be narrowed down in order to make it feasible. The first differentiation was made between choral and solo vocal music. The latter was chosen because a fairly substantial study of the choral music was made by George E. Hansler in his D Mus Dissertation, *Stylistic Characteristics and Trends in the Choral Music of Five Twentieth Century British Composers*, at the New York University in 1957, and a most comprehensive study, *A Critical Study of the Word/Music Correspondences in the Choral Works of Gerald Finzi*, was made by Kathleen E. Robinson at the Northwestern University, Illinois in 1994. When the solo vocal music was examined, it became clear that no complete study existed even though the work of Mark Robert Carlisle, *Gerald Finzi: A Performance Analysis of "A Young Man's Exhortations" and "Till Earth Outwears", Two Works for High Voice and Piano to Poems by Thomas Hardy*, (1991) and the chapter *The Hardy Songs of Gerald Finzi* and additional very complete song list from *Sensibility and the English Song* (1985) by Stephen Banfield, are by no means slight.

The Hardy-Finzi connection became more and more attractive as an option in the preliminary study and the fifty-one songs composed a significant enough proportion of the eighty-eight completed songs to make an informed comment on the compositional style of Gerald Finzi as it manifests itself in the solo songs.

To do justice to the proposed purpose, a *Model for the Analysis of Songs* was devised. The reasons for the necessity of such a model are twofold: that all stylistic elements (Elements of Music) be consistently explored in all the songs studied and to focus the attention of the analyser, who had to work in between whiles over a long period of time. The existence of the model does not imply that a static, unbending formula was rigidly followed but rather that a flexible, self-modifying set of guidelines protected the quality of the analysis. Though a model-orientated analysis may seem reductionist and over-linear, a holistic statement on each song was the underlying purpose, as will be clear from the constant reference to the function of the detail in relation to the textual meaning and the atmosphere of the whole. The model will be discussed briefly:

A separate chapter (Chapter 1), considers the poet, Thomas Hardy, in a general sense, establishing character, philosophical tendencies, view of the world and so on. The background to each poem is explored, in so far as information on individual poems is available. Next, a detailed critical analysis is made of each poem, largely with F. R. Lewis' SIFT Method (Sense-Intention-Feeling-Tone) in mind, without following it strictly. The style and format of the individual poem is then considered and, finally, a synthesis attempts to bring the dissection back together again to establish the frame of mind of the composer before he set the poem. This is the purpose of the first part of the model:

## **Text**

- 1. Poet**
  - \* General background
  - \* Background to poem
- 2. Poem**
  - \* Content
  - \* Meaning
  - \* Message
  - \* Style
  - \* Form
- 3. Synthesis**

The second part, dealing with the actual setting follows the basic Elements of Music (Timbre, Duration, Pitch, Dynamics, Texture, Structure, Mood and Atmosphere) which collectively and in relation to one another, result in the style. These are the variables the composer has at his disposal to construct his work of art.

## **Setting**

- 1. Timbre**
  - \* Voice type
  - \* Accompaniment

Under Timbre, the voice type and accompaniment is discussed. Here, first and foremost, an impression of the whole is given. One song is accompanied by a small orchestra, six by string quartet and forty-four by piano. The range of the instrument or instruments and the resulting sonority, the articulation or other performance indications and the atmosphere which is created, are explored.

- 2. Duration**
  - \* Metre: textual metre vs musical metre
  - \* Rhythm: textual rhythm vs musical rhythm
  - \* Speed: textual speed vs musical speed

The element of Duration is further divided into metre, rhythm and speed. The relationship between textual and musical metre, metric variation and its purpose, and the most prominent metre and its impact on the atmosphere of the song is examined. The rhythmic relationship between text and music is indicated, the rhythmic motifs and activity and specific settings, and the rhythmic lengthening of voiced consonants are investigated. Finally the tempo and variation thereof are related to the textual meaning.

- 3. Pitch**
  - \* Melody
  - \* Tonality
  - \* Harmony & Counterpoint

Pitch organization is subdivided into melody, tonality and harmony. Under 'melody' a complete analysis is

made of the interval relationships in the vocal part (distance and direction). This allows one to make a conclusive statistical statement on the singability of each song and of the body of songs. Specific interval settings and their relation to the textual meaning, whether structural or semantic, are discussed. The melodic curve is graphically represented to indicate the climax or climaxes and any other melodic patterns which establish themselves. Phrase and sub-phrase lengths are examined and suggestions are made with regard to breathing where the breathing places are not obvious. Under 'tonality' the basic key or keys and all modulations are indicated as is their relationship to the meaning of the text. Other related features such as chromaticism, pan-diatonicism, modality, bi- or poly-tonality and atonality are investigated. A functional harmonic analysis is made, non-harmonic tones are considered and harmonic devices such as pedalpoint, *ostinato*, non-triadic construction, triad extension, added tones and chord inversion are explored. Examples of the use of free counterpoint or counterpoint in stricter procedures, are discussed.

Harmonic analysis follows the following system: capital Roman numerals are used to indicate major triads and a small plus sign in addition, shows an augmented triad. Minor triads are indicated with lower case Roman numerals and the diminished triad is finished with a small circle, in addition. Any alteration of a triad from its diatonic form has the word 'altered' in brackets behind it while additions to a triad are indicated with the word 'add' and the interval distance from the root of the triad to the added tone. Inversions are indicated with the standard figured bass system.

**4. Dynamics** \* Loudness variation in relation to text and other elements

In the songs with a piano accompaniment, a detailed, graphic summary of the loudness variation of each song is given. The frequency of occurrence, dynamic range, variety and dynamic accents is related to the meaning of the text.

**5. Texture** \* Density variation in relation to text and other elements

The texture of the accompaniment is tabulated by approximating the most prominent occurrence in each bar. A summary of the different textures are expressed as a percentage from which the dominant texture of each song can be isolated. Each texture type is then carefully related to the text in order to establish to what degree the meaning or atmosphere is enhanced.

**6. Structure** \* Text structure vs musical structure

A structural analysis of each song has been tabulated so that the formal aspects can be perceived in a single

glance. Preludes, interludes, postludes, links, vocal phrases and sub-phrases are clearly visible in this analysis.

#### **7. Mood and Atmosphere \***

Mood and atmosphere of the text represented by musical elements

Establishing the mood and atmosphere suggested by the text should be the main purpose of setting any text. The purpose of the study is to determine to what degree Finzi is successful in creating the appropriate atmosphere for each song. Apart from the fact that a song must be singable, the other most important criterion by which its success can be measured is whether or not the atmosphere of the text is captured in the setting.

### **General comment on style aspects**

The detailed analysis of each song is followed by a short summary which comments on the general stylistic characteristics which emanate from the song in question.

A phenomenological approach is taken, the purpose being initially to reserve value-judgement and to establish the existence of patterns, deviation from patterns, or lack of patterns. Subsequently the significance of these patterns (or lack thereof) is assessed and related to the specific meaning of the text and to the larger context of the atmosphere created in the song.

*Volume II* of this study contains the analysis, and serves as reference for the performer, while *Volume I* contains the extracted or generalised comment on the compositional style of Gerald Finzi.

### **THE AIMS OF THIS STUDY**

To discover, through systematic analysis of the musical scores and available literature,

- Gerald Finzi's interpretation of the meaning of each text as exhibited by his setting thereof (Translation of textual language to musical language),
- Why Gerald Finzi chose to set these particular fifty-one Hardy texts to music,
- What kind of general vocal, pianistic and song-writing style emanates from the fifty-one Hardy songs.

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## **Inspiration**

My Heavenly Father, who in spite of Hardy's misgivings and Finzi's agnosticism (and my scepticism at times), still guards and directs my own fragile existence.

## **Volume II**

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Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928)

## CHAPTER 1

### The life of Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy III was born on Tuesday, 2 June 1840 and was cast aside by the doctor as dead when the nurse attending rescued him exclaiming, 'Dead! Stop a minute: he's alive enough, sure!' (*The Life of Thomas Hardy* 1928:18). This event took place in the Hardy homestead (built by Thomas' grandfather around 1800) in Higher Bockhampton, parish of Stinsford, Dorset. It was to the county of Dorset that Hardy would return in 1885 to take up permanent residence at Max Gate just outside Dorchester, a mile or two from his birthplace.

Hardy's origins were humble. His father was a mason and a builder and his mother without social status in the class-conscious, Victorian England. About his father (Thomas Hardy II), he writes in the autobiography, *The Life of Thomas Hardy* (Vol. I 1928 and Vol. II 1930) which was to appear under the authorship of his second wife, Florence:

To the courtesy of his manners there was much testimony among the local county-ladies with whom he came into contact as a builder....He carried no stick or umbrella till past middle-life, and was altogether an open-air liver and a great walker always. He was good, too, when young at horn pipes and jigs, and other folk-dances. (1928:16)

Three significant qualities that would find their way into Thomas Hardy III are evident from this description: a strong attraction to women in general, a love of the countryside and a lasting interest in music. From his mother, Jemima Hardy (née Hand), he inherited his passion for books and literature. It was also she who made sure that young Tommy had as good an education as she was able to provide.

Establishing the character of the later writer of fourteen novels and eight books of verse, Hardy provides snatches of detail concerning his early childhood, in *The Life of Thomas Hardy*:

Though healthy he was fragile, and precocious to a degree, being able to read almost before he could walk, and to tune a violin when of quite tender years. He was of ecstatic temperament, extraordinarily sensitive to music and of the endless....country dances that his father played of an evening in his early married years, and to which the boy danced a *pas seul* in the middle of the room, there were three or four that moved the child to tears, though he strenuously tried to hide them. (1928:18)

And a little later he adds an incident which remained with him his entire life and eventually became the germ of the poem "Childhood Among The Ferns" (from *Winter Words* 1928):

He was lying on his back in the sun, thinking how useless he was, and covered his face with a straw hat. The sun's rays streamed through the interstices of the straw, the lining having disappeared. Reflecting on his experiences of the world so far as he had got it, he came to the conclusion that he did not wish to grow up. Other boys were always thinking of when they would be men; he did not want at all to be a man, or to possess things, but to remain as he was, in the same spot, and to know no more people than he already knew. (1928:19-20)

The characteristics which were to emerge from these early indications are the occasional 'ecstatic temperament', the extraordinary 'sensitivity', an acute awareness of detail and the ability to describe it, a questioning of the purpose of existence, the feeling of security in rural surroundings and a passionate love of nature.

In his assessment of the 'early childhood', Hardy's most recent biographer, Martin Seymour-Smith in his prolific work, *Hardy* (Bloomsbury 1994) comments on the incident with the straw hat:

It was the very young boy's way of contemplating the meaning of existence, if indeed existence had meaning. He already wanted to know. This became an admittedly 'gloomy', though hardly pointless habit with him. He would never be able to state, unequivocally, that life had no meaning - as would so many writers after him - and he could only ever go as far as to say that he was unaware of a coherent purpose to existence. But he always suspected, showed by the persistence with which he pursued the theme of death, that an intrinsic part of any meaning that existence might have would contain the fact of its end. (1994:18)

Hardy's schooling included the classics (Dumas, Shakespeare, Dryden, Scott) and learning Latin, Greek, French and German. He also gained extensive knowledge of the English Bible and biblical allusion would be a recurring theme in all his writing, prose and poetry. Many a teenage 'romance from a distance' would provide the foundations for the extensive connections and relationships Hardy had with women, not only those that crossed his path but also those he created or imagined. One such example is Lizbie Brown "a game-keeper's pretty daughter, who won Hardy's boyish admiration because of her beautiful bay-red hair" (1928:33). The poem "To Lizbie Brown" which Hardy writes much later, contemplates not only what might have been, but also his own slow awakening and private loss - an altogether delicate poem. An important insight concerning Hardy's view of adolescence is given by Seymour-Smith:

To be a man was in Hardy's estimation a rare achievement. Adolescence sees and feels everything freshly and keenly, and a man may retain those qualities through out his life. (1994:37)

Of the impressions from his youth to make a strong impact on Hardy are two public hangings he witnessed. The first is that of Martha Brown (9 August 1856) of which Hardy leaves an account in a letter to Lady Pinney, dated 20 January 1926 (two years before his death) quoted from Seymour-Smith:

Pinney, dated 20 January 1926 (two years before his death) quoted from Seymour-Smith:

My sincere thanks for the details....about the unhappy woman Martha Brown, who I am ashamed to say I saw hanged, my only excuse being that I was but a youth and had to be in town at the time for other reasons....I remember what a fine figure she showed against the sky as she hung in the misty rain, and how the tight black silk gown set off her shape as she wheeled half-round and back. (1994:33)

The second episode, involving a certain Ceale, is recorded by Hardy himself in *The Life of Thomas Hardy*:

The whole thing had been so sudden that the glass [brass telescope] fell from Hardy's hands. He seemed alone on the heath with the hanged man, and crept homeward wishing he had not been so curious. (1928:37)

These two macabre incidents have previously been underrated in terms of the effect they had on Hardy's development at a very impressionable age. Hardy's perpetual return to the themes of death, man's inhumanity to man and the purposelessness of suffering stem from these youthful impressions.

At the age of sixteen, in July 1856, Thomas Hardy joined the architect's office of Mr John Hicks as an apprentice. Apart from learning the art of church restoration, drawing and planning, the study of Greek and Latin flourished in between whiles. It was during this time that he was befriended by the members of the Moule family, especially the fourth son of Henry Moule (vicar of Fordington), Horace. This friendship ended only with the latter's suicide in 1873. Apart from the appeal Horace's somewhat dramatic character had to the younger man's imagination, it was Horace Moule that constantly encouraged Hardy to write poetry. The first poem from this period to survive, "Domicilium" describes the homestead at Higher Bockhampton as it was around 1800.

In 1862 Hardy decided to leave Dorchester for London largely as a result of Horace Moule's curious advice that he should pursue an architectural career. It has been suggested by several biographers that a romantic blunder may well have played a part in his decision to leave. Seymour-Smith sums up:

Although he became physically strong, he was doing too much: morning study, architectural work, drawing and painting, excitedly discussing literature with Hooper Tobert and Horace Moule, playing the fiddle at nights, composing poetry. He was thinking too hard, and was assailed by unwelcome sexual feelings. His decision to leave was sensible. (1994:59)

In London Hardy soon found a job with Arthur Blomfield as a "Gothic draughtsman who could restore and design churches and rectory houses" (1928:48). Having worked hard for Blomfield and won a silver medal from the Royal Institute of British Architects, Hardy, by 1863, was bored with the monotonous and

mechanical drawing, as he called it and recommenced reading a great deal, especially poetry. Before he began to write poetry seriously, he set himself the task of learning how. He bought all the English poets he could lay his hands on as well as Walker's *Rhyming Dictionary*, to which he made additions of his own (1994:70). He considered the mission of a poet to be the recording of impressions. The words from Aeschylus (Agamemnon): 'Things are what they are and will be brought to their destined issue' (1994:78) were to become the creed whereby he would conduct his writings. Hardy would get none of his early poetic experiments into print.

Hardy's notion of God emerges through these early poems (notably "Hap"). Seymour-Smith puts it as follows:

Yet the picture of 'God' in 'Hap' is already distinctly non-Christian - offensive to clergymen of Tom's own time and place. Commentators have been keen to establish that Tom acquired his view of God from Darwin [*Origin of Species* 1859]....But while Tom must have been impressed, his notion of an indifferent (non-benevolent) deity was essentially his own, the result of his temperament, formed around his pre-Darwin understanding of Aeschylus: 'The world does not despise us; it only neglects us,' he wrote in May 1865. (1994:77)

The complex dichotomy of Hardy's views on Christianity and religion is further highlighted by the short story *The Tragedy of Two Ambitions* (1888) from which Seymour-Smith summarizes:

Sincere Christianity....is nowhere mocked. It never is in Hardy. Despite his scepticism he was a communicating Christian for the whole of his life, and so might be said to have felt an emotional need of the sacraments even while failing to believe in them intellectually. (1994:400)

The much quoted diary entry concerning Hardy's search for God for fifty years without finding him often misrepresents the complexity of his beliefs. The quote, in any case, refers to God in an "external personality".

*January 29* [1890] I have been looking for God 50 years, and I think that if he had existed I should have discovered him. As an external personality, of course - the only true meaning of the word. (1928:293)

The boredom of his architectural duties and over-exertion of working during the day and studying at night took its toll. By the summer of 1867 Blomfield, noticing Hardy's deteriorating health, suggested that he should "go into the country to regain his vigour" (1928:70). Hardy, secretly, was of the opinion that he would like to remain in the country because he cared more for human emotion than social status. The ageing John Hicks needed an architect in Dorchester and Hardy was employed by him, once again. On 29 April 1867, Hardy makes the following note at the time of his departure from London (quoted from *The Life of Thomas Hardy*):

Had the teaching of experience grown cumulatively with the age of the world we should have been ere now as great as God. (1928:73)

Back at Bockhampton, Hardy recovered soon enough and his determination to be a writer, if not a poet, escalated. He started his first novel, *A Poor Man and a Lady*, around 1868. Now lost, the novel was tentatively accepted for publication but the reviewer, George Meredith, gave the advice that the novel should indeed not be published and that Hardy should "soften the story or concentrate on a new work" (1994:91). The latter option was taken, casting poetry aside only temporarily for the sake of earning a living from writing novels. The fourteen novels are a formidable list:

*Desperate Remedies* (1871)

*Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872)

*A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873)

*Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874)

*The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876)

*Return of the Native* (1878)

*The Trumpet Major* (1880)

*A Laodicean* (1881)

*Two on a Tower* (1882)

*The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886)

*The Woodlanders* (1887)

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891)

*Jude the Obscure* (1895)

*The Well-Beloved* (1897)

Hardy's romantic involvement with Tryphena Sparks commenced soon after his return to Bockhampton in 1867 and was his second fairly serious romantic relationship, the first being with Eliza Nicholls in London. Much speculation about the second affair remains. The relationship was broken off when Tryphena left to pursue her career as a schoolmistress.

In February 1870, G R Crickmay who had taken over Hicks' firm at the latter's death, asked Hardy to inspect a Gothic church for possible restoration. The church was in a remote part of Cornwall in the parish of St Juliot and it was here that he met Emma Lavinia Gifford. The circumstances of their meeting are worth repeating in Emma's own words from *Some Recollections*, found after Emma's death in 1912 (quoted from *The Life of Thomas Hardy*):

At that moment the frontdoor bell rang, and the architect was ushered in. I had to receive him alone, and felt a curious uneasy embarrassment at receiving anyone, especially so necessary a personage as the architect. I was immediately arrested by his familiar appearance, as if I had seen him in a dream - his slightly different accent, his soft voice; also I noticed a blue paper sticking out of his pocket. I was explaining who I was, as I saw that he took me for the parson's daughter or wife, when my sister appeared to my great relief, and he went up to Mr. Holder's with her....So I met my husband. (1928:92-3)

An event which deeply upset Thomas Hardy and of which the sense of loss remained with him until the end of his life, was the suicide of his friend and tutor, Horace Moule. Hardy recalls his friend's premature death in a poem "Standing by the Mantelpiece - H.M.M. 1873" in later life.

Emma and Thomas were married in September 1874, in spite of Hardy's "sense despondency about marital relationships" (1994:113). The Hardys moved around a lot during the next few years, settling in London for a while in 1877 where Hardy became ill and depressed yet again. It was at this point, now that Hardy had sufficient means, having published the successful *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) that they decided to move to Dorchester where Max Gate was built and Hardy lived for the rest of his life.

An attribute of Hardy's personality, his crude, 'peasant-like' humour is evident in many of his novels (notably, *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *The Mayor of Casterbridge*) and exhibited in poignant reply to a journalist's question about the 'methods of Authors'(quoted from Seymour-Smith):

Thomas Hardy begs to state....that (1) he prefers night for working, but finds daytime advisable as a rule; that (2) he follows no plan as to outline; that (3) he uses no stimulant unless tea can be considered as such; that (4) habit is to remove his boots or slippers as a preliminary to work; that (5) he has no definite hours for writing; that (6) he only occasionally works against his will. (1994:317)

The Hardys travelled in Europe extensively on various occasions during their married life, their 'Italian Journey' of 1887 being an example. Back home they spent time in London which was part of their summer habit, usually renting a flat or part of a house.

In his notebook of 24 January 1888, Hardy explains his political beliefs, an important aspect in understanding his unconventional ways of thinking (quoted from *The Life of Thomas Hardy*):

I find my politics are neither Tory nor Radical. I may be called an Intrinsicist. I am against privilege derived from accident of any kind, and am therefore equally opposed to aristocratic privilege and democratic privilege. (By that I mean the arrogant assumption that the only labour is hand-labour - a worse arrogance than that of the aristocrat, - the taxing of the worthy to help the masses of the population who will not help themselves when they might, etc.) Opportunity should be equal for all, but those who will not avail themselves of it should be cared for merely - not be a burden to, nor the ruler over, those who do avail themselves thereof. (1928:268)

At the time Hardy started working on *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in 1888, approaching the age of fifty, his marriage to Emma became gradually more strained. As a result he became interested in other women, notably Rosamund Tomson and later Florence Henniker. This is not to say that his relationship with Emma was unbearable; the attentive letters he wrote to her at this time show exactly the contrary and Hardy was far too sensitive and loyal to contemplate leaving her. A more serious breach would come after the publication of *Jude the Obscure* (1895), to which Emma reacted vehemently on the grounds of the novel's 'irreligiousness'. Her husband's failure to share her devout Christian sentiment towards the Anglican Church was the single most important factor in their gradual estrangement.

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, having been rejected by two publishers, was then 'softened' for serialization but restored to the original in volume form and it immediately became a best-seller. This success largely freed Tom from further financial worries. The novel created a storm but at the same time increased Hardy's reputation instantly.

Hardy 'pursued' Florence Henniker vigorously between 1892 and 1893 and this resulted in a number of poems, the most telling, "A Broken Appointment". Florence's conventionality and acute awareness of the constraints of society prevented their acquaintance from becoming a love affair as Hardy would have wished. Nevertheless Hardy continued to assist her with her writing and their friendship lasted for the rest of her life. He modelled his short story, *An Imaginative Woman*, on her conventionality and ridicules his own position in the unfortunate affair. The volume publication of *Jude the Obscure* (1895) created another storm and deepened the rift between Emma and Thomas. How the couple coped with the disagreement between them is unknown. Their public life continued fairly normally. They went on cycling trips and toured to the Continent again. Seymour-Smith sums up:

That Tom was often unhappy about his marriage is undoubted. But, so far as life must be considered as a philosophical....proposition he was unhappy about that, too; no-one is surprised to learn that in his 1901 'conversation' with William Archer (whom he

trusted) he affirmed that he agreed with Sophocles that 'not to be born is best'. In the circumstances 'pessimist' cannot be too inappropriate a word to describe him, although it cannot cover the cases in a world in which optimism is an increasing surreal duty. But that was his....'world-philosophy', not to be confused with his emotional state. Those who seek to show that it was the result of the special unhappiness of his marriage are misguided, unwise and too literal in their approach. (1994:568-9)

On 17 October 1896, soon after their arrival home from Europe, Hardy writes in *The Life of Thomas Hardy*:

Poetry. Perhaps I can express more fully in verse ideas and emotions which run counter to the inert crystallized opinion....which the vast body of man have vested interests in supporting. To cry out in passionate poem that the Supreme Mover or Movers, the Prime Force or Forces, must be either limited in power, unknowing, or cruel - which is obvious enough, and has been for centuries - will cause them merely a shake of the head; but to put it in argumentative prose will make them sneer, or foam, and set all literary contortionists jumping on me, a harmless agnostic, as if I were a clamorous atheist, which in their crass illiteracy they seem to think is the same thing....If Galileo had said in verse that the world moved, the Inquisition might have let him alone. (1930:57-8)

"He only had to prepare *The Well-Beloved* (1897) for volume publication and then he could be finished with prose for good" (1994:570). In the meantime he had commenced the planning of a large-scale verse drama, against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars, *The Dynasts*, which would eventually be published in three volumes (1904). It was his "first and last attempt to put forth a complete philosophy of life" (1994:577). The first collection of poems was entitled *Wessex Poems* (1898) in order to make a connection between his poetry and prose, the latter largely based in his own romanticized Wessex. The complete list of poetry anthologies are:

*Wessex Poems* (1898)

*Poems of the Past and the Present* (1901)

*Time's Laughingstocks* (1909)

*Satires of Circumstance* (1914)

*Moments of Vision* (1917)

*Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922)

*Human Shows* (1925)

*Winter Words* (1928)

There are also a number of editions of *Collected Poems*, that of 1919, including all poems published to date and then an updated version after each new publication until 1930. *The Complete Poems by Thomas Hardy* (Gibson 1976) revised the 1930 text and added previously uncollected poems, fragments and independent poems as extracts from *The Dynasts*. (Gibson 1976:xxxv-vi). The total number of poems published in the 1976 edition reaches a staggering 947.

The road on which Hardy embarks "to express more fully in verse the ideas and emotions" leads him to the heart of the persistent questions of existence: relationships, the nature of God and religion and the meaning of life. About his relationship with Emma, he realised that she "who tormented him from time to time was his true muse" (1994:610). The scores of love poems he writes to her after her death, bear testimony to this. Concerning the nature of God, Hardy speculates at the age of sixty: "There may be a consciousness, infinitely far off, at the other end of the chain of phenomena, always striving to express itself and always baffled and blundering" (1994:621). And of his religiousness Seymour-Smith says that it "consists largely of his struggle to resist [the] notion of meaninglessness....to reject a concomitant humanism without a foundation in the human heart" (1994:620). Hardy would write to Frédérick Lefèvre in 1925 a letter in which he pleaded for a "religious spirit" (quoted from Seymour-Smith):

I dream of an alliance between religions freed from dogmas. The religion which ought to be preserved....would be created by poetry....Poetry, pure literature and religion are the visible points of the most authentic mental and emotional life. (1994:580)

Thomas Hardy and Florence Dugdale met for the first time at the end 1905. Their 'affair' developed slowly and to give it some respectability in the public eye (and to try to cope with their secret deceit and enormous guilt) Hardy suggested that she become his secretary; a proposal which only materialized in 1910. They spent the first of many sojourns in Aldeburgh, at the holiday house of Hardy's discreet friend, Edward Clodd, from 13 to 21 August 1909. For roughly a year the affair continued, deceiving Emma completely. Ironically, by the summer of 1910 Florence "became fulsome praiser of Emma's literary work, and an active agent for it, while living for long periods at Max Gate as her—not Tom's—secretary-assistant and companion" (1994:730). It is unsure whether Emma knew about the affair even while Florence was staying at Max Gate.

Emma's behaviour became at times eccentric as a result of her ailing health and possibly the potent sedative she took and was able to order at will (1994:753). She died quite suddenly on 27 November 1912 at the age of seventy-two after thirty-eight years of marriage to Thomas Hardy. Florence Dugdale soon moved in to take charge. By early 1914, just over a year after Emma's death, she became the new Mrs Thomas Hardy. Seymour-Smith explores her motives:

She did it for a complex of reasons: she did not love him, but had sometimes seen to his sexual needs, which she called a responsibility; she was never so happy, as she admitted more than once, than when she had someone to look after; and she might yet, as Mrs Thomas Hardy, achieve immortality as a writer herself. (1994:769)

The death of Emma "released a flood of the tenderest poetry Hardy had ever written." (Carlisle 1991:21). All the strain and strife of the last years was redeemed in this 'flood'. In every book of poems from *Moment of Vision* (1917) onward, there are recollections of Emma - their happier times and his regrets about the unhappy times.

Many honours, even though somewhat belated, were bestowed on Hardy including the Order of Merit, a gold medal from the Royal Society of Literature, an Honorary D.Litt. from Cambridge and an Honorary Fellowship of Magdalene College, Oxford.

"The outbreak of the First World War had a devastating effect on Hardy" (1994:795). Some 'patriotic' poems in *Moments of Vision* (1917) appear under the sub-heading "Poems of War and Patriotism", the first of which is the famous, "The Men Who Marched Away" (written on 5 September 1914 and published in *The Times* of 9 September) which gained wide popularity. In a letter to Florence Henniker Hardy writes as the result of a cousin dying on the front (quoted from Seymour-Smith):

My faith in the good that is in humankind - except in isolated individuals, of whom happily there are many - has been rudely shaken of late. (1994:816)

It was in 1916 that his wife, Florence, started pressing him about a biography that she would write, persuading him on the grounds that biographies would inevitably be written and, that if she were to produce one, they could make sure that it was done properly. It was clear to Hardy, pretty soon, that she was not capable and "he came to enjoy cynically presenting himself through the eyes of a somewhat officious third party" (1994:825).

What remains is the brief infatuation Hardy had for an amateur actress, Gertrude Bugler, who played the role of Tess in a local production and was so perfect that Hardy commended her to the London theatres. Florence was extremely jealous of her without any grounds for Hardy was, after all, an old man merely reacting to a beautiful, young intelligent woman who happened to resemble one of his creations (Seymour-Smith 1994:846).

Of his last years, Seymour-Smith wrote:

In some ways Tom's life actually turned into those poems, or, more accurately, merged into his steady creation of them. He came to want to turn everything, from his most intimate memories to the death of his dog, into poetry. He worked at them persistently until his very last days. (1994:848)

Thomas Hardy died on 11 January 1928. His heart was removed and buried in Stinsford's graveyard in Emma's grave and his body was buried in Westminster Abbey.

His faithful friend and frequent companion, Herman Lea, who was Hardy's confidant, said the following of the man after reading *The Life of Thomas Hardy* of which the second volume appeared in 1930 (quoted from Seymour-Smith):

The reading does not bring back to me the man I knew - I think I may say pretty intimately - for nearly thirty years....What I miss most is a certain simplicity which, to me, always seemed an integral part of Hardy's make-up - his whole-hearted interest in the little things of life... Hardy possessed a sense of humour both subtle and whimsical: I never knew him to be conventional about any subject - except perhaps with 'his tongue in his cheek' - and he was certainly not orthodox. (1994:604-6)

The last word belongs to Hardy himself taken from a letter (17 February 1920) written (by Florence on account of a cold) to Joseph McCabe who wished to include him in his *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Rationalists* (quoted from *The Life of Thomas Hardy*):

[Hardy] says he thinks he is rather an irrationalist than a rationalist, on account of his inconsistencies. He has, in fact, declared as much in prefaces....where he explains his views as being mere impressions that frequently change. Moreover, he thinks he could show that no man is a rationalist, and that human actions are not ruled by reason at all in the last resort. (1930:209-10)



Gerald Finzi (1901 - 1956)

## CHAPTER 2

### The life of Gerald Finzi

Gerald Raphael Finzi was born at 53 Hamilton Terrace in St John's Wood, London on 14 July 1901, the youngest of five children. Finzi's grandfather, an Italian Jew and ship-broker, sought (and found) his fortune in England and married a girl from Bristol. His own father continuing the flourishing business, was also born in London in 1860, roughly making him a contemporary of Hardy. Finzi's father, however, died of mouth cancer in 1907. Both Finzi's parents were musically gifted, though as amateurs, his father being a singer and his mother a pianist.

Young Gerald at the age of nine, decided that he would become a composer. He despised the preparatory school to which he was sent at Camberley, made little progress and eventually resorted to faking illness to get himself removed. His mother, with a tutor, took him to Switzerland to 'recover' where they remained until the war clouds started gathering over Europe in 1914. Two of his older brothers died after the Finzis' return to England but at Harrogate - where the family settled in 1914 -Gerald was able to start his first musical studies with Ernest Farrar, the local organist. Diana McVeagh, in *Hifi News and Record Reviews* October 1981, says of this important relationship:

He [Farrar] understood this stubborn teenager, who, had he met at that early stage a dry, orthodox teacher, might easily have withered. (1981:67)

The series of shocking and unsettling deaths which overshadowed and troubled Finzi's youth continued with the death of his remaining brother and his first real teacher, Farrar, at the front in 1918. The deaths of his father, three brothers and his teacher affected him profoundly and caused him to become increasingly introverted and isolated. He took refuge in an almost insatiable, private study of English literature.

In spite of Sir Charles Stanford's (Royal College of Music) advice that Finzi should not pursue a career in music because of his lack of facility on any musical instrument, he resumed his studies with Sir Edward Bairstow in 1918 which lasted until 1922. This was his introduction to vocal music, both choral and solistic. With his mother, the only person from whom he received support and encouragement concerning his proposed career, he moved to Painswick in Gloucestershire to concentrate on composing in the solitude and tranquillity of the countryside - the countryside of Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Ivor Gurney. His first success as a composer came in 1924 with the performance and publication (by the Carnegie Trust) of *Severn Rhapsody for Chamber Orchestra* (Op. 3). As a result of his extremely, self-critical attitude towards his own work, Finzi later rejected this rhapsody, as he did some other early works. About the

unorthodox numbering of his works and the gaps in opus numbers, Howard Ferguson, friend and editor, writes in, *Music and Letters Vol. 38* (1957):

His [Finzi's] fondness....for keeping many works on the stocks accounts in part for his idiosyncratic use of opus numbers. (The numbers themselves can be found at the end of each work, printed in small Roman figures below the last bar.) In Finzi's own list of his compositions a number would be reserved for a work which only existed in the roughest of sketches, such as the projected string Trio, the original Op. 25, an offshoot of the published Prelude and Fugue for string trio, Op. 24; or for some revision of an early work which he planned but had not yet carried out. Thus there are now occasional blanks in the list; and the eight posthumous works all have opus numbers *earlier* than those of the last works published during his lifetime. (1957:132)

A complete list of works showing these 'blanks' and earlier rejected works, follows (dates where discoverable, refer to publication and not conception or completion between which there was often a lapse of many years):

- Op. 1        *Five Two-part Songs with piano*, Rossetti (1936)
- Op. 2        *By Footpath and Stile for baritone and string quartet*, Hardy (1925 rev. 1940s)
- Op. 3        *A Severn Rhapsody for chamber orchestra* (1924)
- Op. 4        -
- Op. 5        *Three Short Elegies for mixed choir*, Drummond (1936)
- Op. 6        *Introit for violin and small orchestra* (1935, rev. 1945)
- Op. 7        *Nocturne - New Year Music for orchestra* (1950)
- Op. 8        *Dies Natalis for soprano or tenor and string orchestra*, Traherne (1939)
- Op. 9        *Farewell to Arms for tenor and small or string orchestra*, Knevet\ Peele (1945)
- Op. 10       *Eclogue for piano and string orchestra* (1991)
- Op. 11       *Romance for string orchestra*
- Op. 12       *Two Sonnets for tenor or soprano and small orchestra*, Milton
- Op. 13a      *To a Poet for low voice and piano*, Various poets (1965, Op. Posth.)
- Op. 13b      *Oh Fair to See for high voice and piano*, Various poets (1965, Op. Posth.)
- Op. 14       *A Young Man's Exhortation for tenor and piano*, Hardy (1933)
- Op. 15       *Earth and Air and Rain for baritone and piano*, Hardy (1936)
- Op. 16       *Before and After Summer for baritone and piano*, Hardy (1949)
- Op. 17       *Seven Partsongs with piano*, Various poets (1937)
- Op. 18       *Let us Garlands Bring for baritone and piano or string orchestra*, Shakespeare (1942)
- Op. 19a      *Till Earth Outwears for high voice and piano*, Hardy (1958, Op. Posth.)
- Op. 19b      *I Said to Love for baritone and piano*, Hardy (1958, Op. Posth.)
- Op. 20       *The Fall of the Leaf - Elegy for orchestra* (1957, Op. Posth.)
- Op. 21       *Interlude for oboe and string quartet* (1936)
- Op. 22       -
- Op. 23       *Five Bagatelles for clarinet and piano* (1945)

- Op. 24 *Prelude and Fugue for violin, viola and cello* (1942)
- Op. 25 *Prelude for string orchestra*
- Op. 26 *Lo, the Full Sacrifice for chorus and orchestra*, Crashaw (1946)
- Op. 27 *Three Anthems for chorus and organ*, Taylor\Vaughan
- Op. 28a *Songs from 'Love's Labours Lost' with piano*, Shakespeare (1948)
- Op. 28b -
- Op. 29 *Intimations of Immortality for tenor, chorus and orchestra*, Wordsworth (1950)
- Op. 30 *For St Cecilia: Ceremonial Ode for tenor, chorus and orchestra*, Blunden (1950)
- Op. 31 *Concerto for clarinet and strings* (1949)
- Op. 32 *Thou Didst Delight My Eyes for male voice choir*, Bridges (1952)
- Op. 33 *All this night: Christmas Motet for mixed choir*, (Austin) (1951)
- Op. 34 -
- Op. 35 *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men for male voice choir and piano*, Eccl. XLIV (1952)
- Op. 36 *Magnificat for chorus and orchestra*, Luke I, (1952)
- Op. 37 -
- Op. 38 *Grand Fantasia and Toccata for piano and orchestra* (1953)
- Op. 39 *In Terra Pax for soprano, chorus and orchestra*, Bridges (1954)
- Op. 40 *Concerto for cello and orchestra* (1955)

In 1925 Finzi moved back to London to take private lessons in counterpoint from Dr O. R. Morris. It was at Morris' house that he met for the first time Vaughan Williams and a host of other young composers and musicians including Ferguson, Robin Milford, Edmund Rubbra and Cedric Thorpe Davie. Of this particular time, Howard Ferguson writes in *Music and Letters*, in 1957, the year after Finzi's death:

For the next eight or nine years, until he moved permanently into the country a year or so after his marriage, Finzi and I generally managed to meet about once a week, either at his home or mine. We went through each other's compositions, talked, and made music ceaselessly. His curiosity about new or unfamiliar scores was insatiable and his energy boundless. Being the less fluent pianist of the two, he generally stationed himself at the extreme top of the keyboard and there played whatever vocal or instrumental part came his way, several octaves too high, rather loudly, and with a distinctly capricious sense of time-values. (He always vowed he had an excellent sense of rhythm, but that his fingers, alas, wouldn't do what his brain told them.) In this way we worked through vast quantities of music of every style and period: operas, songs, chamber music and symphonies - these last in more orthodox but scarcely less hectic piano-duet arrangements. Occasionally a piece of plain piano music was allowed by way of relaxation. (1957:130)

It was a time of concert-going, visits to the opera, theatre and galleries and collecting more and more books. Through Vaughan-Williams, by now a friend and colleague, he also met and befriended Gustav Holst. Diana McVeagh gives an important insight into this London period (*Records and Recording Vol. 23* (1980)):

In his little London house where he lived from 1926 Finzi kept where he could always see it a reproduction of Botticelli's Mystic Nativity from the National Gallery, and in 1927 on a walking tour of East Anglia he came upon the dancing angels in the church at March. In 1938 he realized the link between them:

'There is a great resemblance between the static and the ecstatic. I discovered this one day when I was standing in March church and looking up at the double hammerbeam roof and the rows of carved angels - which give the feeling of a Botticelli nativity and were static from very ecstasy' (1980:30)

The first two and last movements of *Dies Natalis* were composed in 1926 but the work was completed only in 1939. Botticelli's 'Mystic Nativity' and the words of Traherne from *Centuries of Meditation*, served as inspiration for Finzi's best-known composition.

In 1928 Finzi was thought to have contracted tuberculosis. He spent a number of months in the Midhurst Sanatorium. As a man of independent means, as a result of prosperous family business and inheritance, Finzi was able to concentrate on music and composing without the need to earn a living, although he was appointed to teach composition at the Royal Academy of Music from 1930 to 1933. During this time he met the artist, Joyce Black whom he married in 1933, Mr and Mrs Vaughan-Williams being the only witnesses at the ceremony. Joy Finzi was exactly the right person for the highly-strung, energetic Gerald. His eldest son, Christopher, writes the following in the programme notes of the 1964 recording of *Dies Natalis*:

By his own accounts his marriage of 1933 rescued him from a nervous breakdown and removed much of his introverted solitude. My chief personal recollections are of a man of enormous nervous energy, highly sensitive and enthusiastically emphatic. (1964:i)

Joy Finzi was a practical, no-nonsense woman with a keen sense of humour who shared Finzi's great love of nature, art and literature. They remained in London for the time being, spending weekends and holidays in Wiltshire where they eventually moved in 1935. Needing more room to practise their respective arts - Joy was a sculptor - and to raise their two boys, Christopher and Nigel, in the type of environment they believed to be conducive to a happy family life, they bought land south of Newbury, Church Farm, at Ashmansworth and built a house to meet their specific needs. Church Farm is on a hill, overlooking thirty miles of rolling countryside towards the southern horizon. This near idyllic place has continued to be the home of the Finzis after Gerald's death in 1956. Diana MacVeagh in *Records and Recording Vol. 23* (1980) captures the atmosphere at Church Farm:

They made a life that seemed to their visitors quite magical. Fastidious in taste, they were content to do without much that more worldly people think necessary, but what they had was of the first quality. The craftsmanship that went into their house, the plants in the garden, the apple orchard, the delicious country food, the happy atmosphere of children and cats - all this, combined with the great library of music

and literature that they collected, and above all their serious attitude to work [make] their home a haven to be remembered. (1980:32)

With a looming war across the Channel, the Finzis moved to their new home in March 1939. A year before the outbreak of the war a number of entries in Joy's journal give a vivid impression of the effect that this second war during his lifetime had on Finzi (quoted from *Sensibility and English Song* by Stephen Banfield):

12 March 1938. [Invasion of Austria - quoting Gerald:] 'You must know what I feel like - it's like watching a man done to death, only this is a civilization and the last strand of central European culture.'

14 March 1938. G has had a bad sleepless night - and has been too disturbed by political events in Austria to do much work. [Quoting him:] 'More persecution for the individuals who do not fit into a regime of physical force.'

5 October 1938. [Quoting Gerald:] 'I can feel nothing but the suffering of humanity and the fear for the future of civilization.' (1985:276)

When the call-up came in 1941, in spite of his pacifist views, Finzi joined the Ministry of War Transport in the summer of 1941. One positive outcome of the war was Finzi's formation of the Newbury String Players. The group was initially formed to provide music for the Christmas service of 1939 and remained an active amateur group beyond Finzi's death in 1956. Diana MacVeagh, in *Records and Recordings Vol. 23* (1980) continues:

To fill what he called 'that terrible hollow feeling' [after the cancellation of the performance of *Dies Natalis* due to the start of the war], he gathered some local amateur string players (including his wife) and gave 'An Hour of Music' in the church across the lane from his house. He kept the group going to take music to camps, village halls, churches, wherever they were needed. Dashing down from London, he gave up precious weekends to rehearsals and concerts, and began to spend weekday lunch hours searching for music suitable for amateurs to play. (1980:32)

As a result of encountering the music of William Boyce, Stanley, Mudge and Garth and Charles Wesley, Finzi was spurred by a new interest in the work of these 'minor' composers and started collecting and editing their manuscripts. These efforts followed on naturally from his earlier drive, along with Marion Scott and Howard Ferguson, to edit and publish the songs and poetry of Gurney in 1937-38. His not ever having had more than a working competence on the piano or any other instrument, the orchestra became Finzi's instrument in the form of the Newbury String Players. Finzi avoided playing his own work and instead provided performance opportunities to young composers and soloists.

In the period immediately following the war, there were a number of commissions: *Lo, The Full Sacrifice for chorus and orchestra*, (1946), *For St Cecilia: Ceremonial Ode for tenor, chorus and orchestra*, Blunden (1947) and *Concerto for clarinet and strings* (1949). He also set William Wordsworth's famous poem, *Intimations of Immortality for tenor chorus and orchestra*, produced at the Three Choirs Festival in 1950.

In 1951 Gerald Finzi was diagnosed as having leukaemia and given at most a decade to live. Confronted with his own mortality, he was prompted to write in the preface to his own catalogue of works entitled, *Absolom's Palace*:

At 49 I feel I've hardly begun my work - 'My thread is cut and yet it is not spun; \ And now I live and now my life is done.' [Tychborne] (1941, 1951:2-3)

He accepted his fate without rebellion, chose to keep the illness a private matter and continued his work with a new urgency. He was instrumental in bringing about another publication of Gurney poetry, edited a volume of Boyce, prepared three lectures on *The Composer's Use of Words*, collected and sorted manuscripts of Hubert Parry for the Bodleian Library and continued with his own compositions. He reworked and completed a large number of Hardy songs and, in 1955, the *Cello Concerto* for the Cheltenham Festival.

Of his death, Howard Ferguson wrote the following in *Music and Letters Vol. 38* (1957):

It is a curious Hardy-esque irony that Finzi should have died not from the mortal disease that hung over him for five long years, but from an illness as seemingly innocuous as chicken-pox. Further that he should have caught the infection in all likelihood while visiting a place he greatly loved: Churchdown Hill near Gloucester, which was always associated in his mind with the inception of 'In Terra Pax'. Because of an earlier operation the infection was more dangerous than he ever guessed. In a couple of weeks it had spread to his brain and killed him.

Those who heard him conduct 'In Terra Pax' in Gloucester Cathedral exactly three weeks before, on the evening of 6 September will long treasure the memory. It was the first performance of the new version for...full orchestra, the effect of which, with its added richness and intensity, was overwhelming. (1957:135)

Gerald Finzi died on 26 September 1956 and is remembered by Howard Ferguson as a "warm and wonderfully generous spirit" (1957:135). Beneath the shell of activity and buoyancy there was, however, an entrenched pessimism, an acute awareness of the fragility of existence and an agnostic approach to religion. His uncertain and lonely childhood, filled with bereavement, disappointment and isolation, left its mark. Diana MacVeagh says (quoted from *Records and Recording Vol. 23* (1980)):

Melancholy was deeply engrained in Finzi's character. Not that it was apparent in casual encounters, nor even to all his friends. He struck many people as a merry, bright sort of person, bursting with ideas and energy, forthright in his opinions. (1980:31)

Howard Ferguson continues (quoted from *Music and Letters Vol. 38* (1957)):

Anyone who met Finzi personally will remember his bubbling sense of fun, his humour and electric nervous energy....Fewer will know that beneath this incisive, buoyant exterior lay a deep and fundamental pessimism. A hint of it was given by his extraordinary sympathy with the works of Thomas Hardy (he set some fifty of the

poems during his lifetime); another by his haunted sense,....that there would never be sufficient time for the completion of what he had it in him to write. (1957:134-5)

Finzi's own words in the preface to the catalogue of his work, entitled *Absalom's Palace*, give a final insight into this sensitive, ambivalent character:

It was Thomas Hardy who wrote 'Why do I go on doing these things?'....some curious force compels us to preserve and project into the future the essence of our individuality, and, in doing so, to project something of our age and civilization. The Artist is like a coral insect, building his reef out of the transitory world around him and making a solid structure to last long after his own fragile and uncertain life....Something is created out of nothing, order out of chaos; and as we succeed in shaping our intractable material into coherence and form, a relief comes to the mind (akin to the relief experienced at the remembrance of some forgotten thing) as a new accretion is added to that projection of oneself....As usually happens, it is likely that new ideas, new fashions and the pressing forward of new generations, will soon obliterate my small contribution. Yet I like to think that in each generation may be found a few responsive minds, and for them I should still like the work to be available. To shake hands with a good friend over the centuries is a pleasant thing, and the affection which an individual may retain after his departure is perhaps the only thing which guarantees an ultimate life to his works. (1941, 1951:1-3)

## CHAPTER 3

### The Texts

It is clear from the list of fifty-one Hardy poems which Finzi set to music and published that he knew the eight anthologies well. He drew on each of these for the texts he set to music. *Moments of Vision* (1917) supplied the most poems (eleven), *Winter Words* (1928) (two poems) and *The Dynasts* (1907) (one poem), the least. A complete list of the poems is set out below:

#### *Wessex Poems (1898)* (four poems)

Amabel (1865)

Ditty (1870)

The Sergeant's Song (1878)

I Look Into My Glass

#### *Poems of the Past and the Present (1901)* (seven poems)

I Said To Love

At A Lunar Eclipse

To Lizbie Brown

I Need Not Go

A Spot

The Comet At Yell'ham

The Self-Unseeing

#### *The Dynasts (1907)* (one poem)

Budmouth Dears [Selected Poems 1916]

#### *Time's Laughingstocks (1909)* (eight poems)

1867

I Say I'll Seek Her

In The Mind's Eye

The Sigh

He Abjures Love (1883)

Let Me Enjoy

Former Beauties

The Market-Girl

***Satires of Circumstance (1914)*** (seven poems)

Channel Firing (1914)

When I Set Out For Lyonnaise (1870)

Before And After Summer (1910)

The Phantom Horsewoman (1913)

Where The Picnic Was

The Dance Continued (Regret Not Me)

Exeunt Omnes (1913)

***Moments of Vision (1917)*** (eleven poems)

Life Laughs Onward

The Oxen

Transformations

At Middle-Field Gate In February

Overlooking The River Stour

Paying Calls

It Never Looks Like Summer (1813)

The Clock Of The Years (1916)

While Drawing In A Churchyard

For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly

In The Time Of "The Breaking Of Nations" (1915)

***Late Lyrics and Earlier (1922)*** (seven poems)

Summer Schemes

Epeisodia

A Young Man's Exhortation (1867)

Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard

Her Temple

The Master And The Leaves (1917)

After Reading Psalms XXXIX, XL etc. (187-)

***Human Shows (1925)*** (four poems)

Waiting Both

The Best She Could (1923)

Two Lips

Shortening Days At The Homestead

***Winter Words (1928)*** (two poems)

Proud Songsters

Childhood Among The Ferns

As far as the subject matter of the chosen poems is concerned, a number of trends are evident. Many poems resist categorization because they do not deal with a single theme. It is nevertheless necessary to explore Finzi's choices in order to discover his preferences. The chosen poems are loosely grouped in approximate thematic categories.

Poems concerning love, the loss and the scorn of love are in the majority (fourteen poems):

Amabel, To Lizbie Brown, I Need Not Go, I Said To Love, Budmouth Dears, The Sigh, The Market-Girl, He Abjures Love, I Say, I'll Seek Her, When I Set Out For Lyonnaise, Her Temple, Two Lips, Ditty, A Spot

There is also a strong inclination towards the pastoral or seasonal theme (eleven poems):

Let Me Enjoy, Before And After Summer, At Middle-Field Gate In February, Overlooking The River Stour, Summer Schemes, Epeisodia, Master And The Leaves, Shortening Days At The Homestead, The Best She Could, Proud Songsters, Childhood Among The Ferns

The theme of the deceased, churchyards or ghosts, is explored by Finzi eight times:

Regret Not Me (The Dance Continued), Channel Firing, The Clock Of The Years, While Drawing In A Churchyard, Paying Calls, Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard, The Phantom Horsewoman, Transformations

Finzi returns five times to poems depicting a sense of loss or isolation or dwelling in the past:

Where The Picnic Was, Exeunt Omnes, It Never Looks Like Summer Here,  
The Self-Unseeing, In The Mind's Eye

Closely linked to the previous theme is the process of memory, ageing, the passing of time and its effect on human memory (three poems):

I Look Into My Glass, Former Beauties, Life Laughs Onward

There are also three poems chosen which deal with man's relationship with the stellar universe:

The Comet At Yell'ham, At Lunar Eclipse, Waiting both

The last category comprises more loosely grouped poems, most of which have a philosophical undercurrent. Three of the poems experiment with hope, one considers the future, another the past and the final two are introspective (seven poems):

For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly, The Oxen, In The Time Of "The  
Breaking Of Nations", 1867, The Sergeant's Song, A Young Man's  
Exhortation, After Reading Psalms XXXIX XL etc.

There also exist 26 incomplete fragments or sketches of songs. These have not been studied, simply because it seems unreasonable and unfair to the composer to examine critically an incomplete musical thought. It was Hardy who said that no poet can be judged until his last line is written and by implication this must be a complete line. Similarly, Finzi's complete works may be examined but the incomplete ones are better left as archival showpieces simply because one cannot be sure how he might have changed his mind about any of the aspects. It is nevertheless of some interest to take note of the poems he started setting to music but did not finish. A consistent reasoning that he might well have rejected any of the poems that he started with, holds but the choice of poems is not directly involved in the critical musical analysis and is therefore included and examined.

***Wessex Poems (1898)*** (three poems)

The Temporary The All  
Thoughts Of Thena  
Middle-Age Enthusiasms

***Poems of the Past and the Present (1901)*** (four poems)

The Subalterns  
God-Forgotten  
By The Earth's Corpse  
Birds At Winter Nightfall

***Time's Laughingstocks (1909)*** (four poems)

The End Of An Episode  
The Night Of The Dance  
News For Her Mother  
Yell'ham-Wood's Story

***Satires of Circumstance (1914)*** (two poems)

To Meet Or Otherwise  
I Found Her Out There

***Moments of Vision (1917)*** (six poems)

Timing Her  
A Merrymaking In Question  
Great Things  
During Wind And Rain  
He Fears His Good Fortune  
Afterwards

***Late Lyrics and Earlier (1922)*** (two poems)

Weathers  
On A Discovered Curl Of Hair

***Human Shows (1925)*** (one poem)

The Faithful Swallow

***Winter Words (1928)*** (four poems)

I Am The One

The Mound

So Various

June Leaves And Autumn

*Moments of Vision* again supplies the greater number of poems. It is of this anthology that Hardy writes (quoted from *The Life of Thomas Hardy*):

I do not expect much notice will be taken of these poems: they mortify the human sense of self-importance by showing, or suggesting that human beings are of no matter or appreciable value in this nonchalant universe. (1930:179)

The poems of the incomplete songs fit roughly into the same thematic categories. There are three very powerful poems, two of which deal with Hardy's view of God (God-Forgotten and By the Earth's Corpse) and one with Hardy's interesting notion that each individual comprises a cluster of selves which vary as circumstances demand, the poem being "So Various".

A number of the books of poetry contain Prefaces which give insight into Hardy's intentions and procedures. In the Preface to *Wessex Poems (1898)* Hardy says the following:

Of the miscellaneous collection of verse that follows, only four pieces have been published, though many were written long ago, and others partly written. In some few cases the verse were turned into prose and printed as such, it having been unanticipated at the time that they might see the light....Pieces are in a large degree dramatic or personative in conception; and this is even where they are not obviously so.

The Preface to *Poems of the Past and the Present (1901)* contains the following paragraph:

Of the subject-matter of this volume - even that which is in other than narrative form - much is dramatic or impersonative even where not explicitly so. Moreover, that portion which may be regarded as individual comprises series of feelings and fancies written down in widely differing moods and circumstances, and at various dates. It will probably be found, therefore, to possess little cohesion of thought or harmony of colouring. I do not greatly regret this. Unadjusted impressions have their value, and

the road to a true philosophy of life seems to lie in humbly recording diverse readings of its phenomena as they are forced on us by chance and change.

From the Preface to *Time's Laughingstocks* (1909) much the same emanates except that the "lyrics penned in the first person [are to be seen] as dramatic monologues by different characters". The most substantial Preface is the 'Apology' to the *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922). Hardy again defends the miscellany of the volume and continues to explain his brand of pessimism:

It is true, nevertheless, that some grave, positive, stark, delineations are interspersed among those of a passive, lighter, and traditional sort pre-sumably nearer to stereotyped taste....

Heine observed....that the soul has her eternal rights; that she will not be darkened by statutes, nor lulled by the music of bells. And what is today, in allusions to the present author's pages, alleged to be 'pessimism' is, in truth, only such 'questionings' in exploration of reality, and is the first step towards the soul's betterment, and the body's also.... Let me repeat what I printed in this relation....in a poem entitled "In Tenebres":

If way to better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst:

that is to say, by the exploration of reality, and its frank recognition stage by stage along the survey, with an eye to the best consummation possible.

The significant note in the last Preface to *Winter Words* (1928) pertains again to the matter of a consistent philosophy:

I also repeat what I have often stated on such occasions, that no harmonious philosophy is intended in these pages - or in any bygone pages of mine, for that matter.

The circumstances in which each poem was written, as far as they could be traced in the biographical material available, are discussed in **Volume II** of this study together with the content style and formal aspects of each poem. A short summary of the structure and characteristics of the poems in general is given below.

To Hardy, his poetry was more important than his prose as an artistic manifestation. He considered it to be of more significant and lasting value, largely because of his view that poetry and religion are two sides of the same coin. "He wrote a total of 947 poems over the course of 68 years" (Carlisle 1991:23) which bears testimony to his prolific output. The poems in some cases touch on and in others deeply explore, a wide range of subject matter as indicated earlier in this chapter when referring to Finzi's choice of poems.

Many of the poems are self-styled: Hardy experiments with form, metre, rhyme and various onomatopoeic effects to create a unique personal voice. "The structure of many of Hardy's poems is more asymmetrical than one might suppose, given his architectural training, but the verses possess a balance and craftsmanship that can be attributed to his early profession" (Carlisle 1991:23). Hardy's involvement in amateur music-making as a child and youth, together with the influence of his father, an enthusiastic fiddle player, is reflected in his poetry in many ways. Not only are many of the poems called 'songs' which have an obvious lyrical inclination but there are also metric and rhythmic subtleties derived from country folksongs and hymn-tunes of which Hardy was extremely fond. Hardy's masterful creation of mood and atmosphere through the use of lexical sets and onomatopoeic effects is one aspect of the poetry which suited Finzi perfectly. While other composers were 'put off' by apparent formalism, complex rhythmic structures and, above all, the apparent tendency towards gloom and the pessimistic label the poetry carries, these attributes were exactly the ones which drew Finzi toward Hardy's poetry. Joy Finzi, Gerald's wife, in her journal on 25 October 1938, quotes from a letter Gerald wrote to her:

I....read Wm Rutland's new little life of Hardy.... I'd like you to read it some time or other....perhaps it will give you some idea of why I have always loved him so much and from earliest days responded, not so much to an influence as to a kinship with with him (I don't mean a kinship with his genius, alas, but with his mental make-up).  
(Banfield 1985:276)

## CHAPTER 4

### Analysis of the songs

Fifty of the fifty-one Hardy songs were analysed according to the model described in the section *Methodology*. The song "Only A Man Harrowing Clods" (from *Requiem da Camara*) was excluded from the detailed analysis because the MS was incomplete at Finzi's death. Though a score was prepared in the 1980s for recording (actually recorded in 1991) by Philip Thomas, it was not available to the writer nor was it deemed appropriate to include it in a study dealing only with manuscripts completed by Finzi himself.

This chapter serves an example of the detailed analysis of the fifty songs which appear in *Volume II* of this study. Two songs were chosen for this purpose: "Budmouth Dears" and "I Said To Love". They are different in character and date from 1929 and 1956 respectively. Where "Budmouth Dears" is a relatively early song, "I Said To Love" is known to be Finzi's last Hardy song. Although these songs do not give an overview of Finzi's compositional development, they represent early and late features of the composer's style.

#### 4.1 Budmouth Dears (Poem: Budmouth Dears (Hussar's Song))

##### 4.1.1 Background to poem

The poem comes from *The Dynasts* (1907) and was also included in *Selected Poems* (1916) in which Hardy "gave six extracts...the status of separate poems" (1976:xxxv - *The Complete Poems* - James Gibson). *The Dynasts* has as backdrop England's involvement in the Napoleonic Wars, The song of a certain young hussar is perfectly credible in evoking the sentiments of the soldiers of a cavalry regiment as they recall from the battle front, the pleasurable emotion aroused in them by the not unforthcoming girls of Budmouth.

Poem

#### Budmouth Dears (Hussar's Song)

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | When we lay where Budmouth Beach is,                                  | a |
| 2  | O, the girls were fresh as peaches,                                   | a |
| 3  | With their tall and tossing figures and their eyes of blue and brown! | b |
| 4  | And our hearts would ache with longing                                | c |
| 5  | As we paced from our sing-singing                                     | c |
| 6  | With a smart <i>Clink! Clink!</i> up the Esplanade and down.          | b |
| 7  | They distracted and delayed us  | d |
| 8  | By the pleasant pranks they played us,                                | d |
| 9  | And what marvel, then, if troopers, even of regiments of renown,      | b |
| 10 | On whom flashed those eyes divine, O,                                 | e |
| 11 | Should forget the countersign, O,                                     | e |
| 12 | As we tore <i>Clink! Clink!</i> back to camp above the town.          | b |

|    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 13 | Do they miss us much, I wonder,                                  | f |
| 14 | Now that war has swept us sunder,                                | f |
| 15 | And we roam from where the faces smile to where the faces frown? | b |
| 16 | And no more behold the features                                  | g |
| 17 | Of the fair fantastic creatures,                                 | g |
| 18 | And no more <i>Clink! Clink!</i> past the parlours of the town?  | b |
| 19 | Shall we once again there meet them?                             | h |
| 20 | Falter fond attempt to greet them?                               | h |
| 21 | Will the gay sling-jacket glow again beside the muslin gown?     | b |
| 22 | Will they archly quiz and con us                                 | i |
| 23 | With a sideway glance upon us,                                   | i |
| 24 | While our spurs <i>Clink! Clink!</i> up the Esplanade and down?  | b |

### Content/Meaning

The poem presents the appreciative but wistful sentiments of a young hussar who, on behalf of his regiment pays homage to the young ladies of Budmouth (Hardy's name for Weymouth). The regiment is temporarily stationed at this coastal resort, prior to 1815, in anticipation of battle on the Continent against Napoleon's forces. In the meantime, part of the daily routine in Budmouth, is drill manoeuvres on the esplanade much in view of the town's beauties. The first two stanzas are retrospective and create an impression of general frolicking with the imminent war very much in the background. Stanzas three and four are set in the present, the soldiers now being on the continent ("we roam...where the faces frown") but their thoughts are very much in England. Two questions are prominent in their minds. Will they miss us much? Shall we meet them again? Both these questions stem from a more serious thought which is not stated but implied: Shall we be alive to enjoy once more such pleasant concourse?

### Style

The poem is much in the style of a marching song with lyrical and ballad-like aspects.

### Form

The poem consists of four sestet stanzas containing lines of uneven length. (The third line is almost double the length of the others.) The final line of each stanza contains the onomatopoeic "Clink! Clink!" of the spurs which acts in the manner of a refrain. The rhyme scheme is an interesting mixture of paired and rounded rhyme with the 'own' sound returning twice in every stanza (l. 3 brown, l. 6 down, l. 9 renown, l. 12 town, l. 15 frown, l. 18 town, l. 21 gown, l. 24 down): aabccb ddbbeb ffbggg hbbiib. The most prevalent metric type is trochaic. There are, however, many variations of which the spondaic examples, in the final line of each stanza, are the most prominent.

### Synthesis

A strong atmosphere of gaiety and excitement is present in the poem which is largely caused by the following extensive lexical set:

fresh, tall and tossing, hearts, sing-singing, smart, distract, pleasant, prank,  
played marvel, flash, divine, smile, fair, fantastic, greet, gay, glow, archly,  
quiz, con, glance

A shorter lexical set establishes the backdrop of war:

paced, troopers, regiment, countersign, tore, camp, miss, swept us sunder,  
frown, no more, spurs.

The poem pulsates with the throbbing of life, love and youth. Being away at war is made bearable for the soldiers by their recollection of the Budmouth girls and there is a sense of longing if not of expectation that there will be a second meeting after the war. Form, style and content are in a happy union here. Dreading the possible consequences of war, human emotions are intensified and the poem successfully portrays this.

#### 4.1.2 Setting

##### (a) Timbre

##### Voice type/Range

The song is set for tenor voice and this voice type is the most suitable to the text: a youthful soldier is best associated with the highest male voice-type. The range is a minor thirteenth from the first C sharp below middle C.

##### Accompaniment characteristics

The range of the piano accompaniment extends to almost six octaves (fourth B below middle C to the third A above middle C). There are four bars in which the right hand material is notated in the bass clef (b. 25-28 see example 3) for the sake of anticipating and supporting the text that establishes the fact that the soldiers have now gone off to war. It is as if a battle is rumbling far off in the distance (b. 27 *p*), when they are wondering if the "Budmouth Dears" are missing them. The general sonority, apart from the aforementioned section, is bright and masculine. There are no indications for the use of pedal and it should be applied with great care and tact not to infringe on the many *staccato* chords.

A lot of careful indication of articulation is to be found in the piano part of the song. Only seven of the bars contain no *staccato* indication and there are also *staccatissimo* indications in bar 41. The many quaver rests which accompany quaver notes are nothing but "written out" crotchet *staccatos*. In a *staccato*-dominated

context, *legato* indications become more significant. The most prominent of these are bars 8<sup>4</sup> - 10<sup>1</sup> which accompany the text, "And our hearts would ache with longing"; bars 16<sup>4</sup> - 18<sup>3</sup> with the words, "And what marvel, then, if troopers, even of regiments of renown" and bars 38<sup>4</sup> -40<sup>3</sup> with the words, "Will the gay sling-jacket glow again beside the muslin gown?". *Portamento* accents are found in a number of bars (b. 1, 2, 3, 4, 14, 29, 37, 42) and have the function of mild accentuation. Stronger accents (>) are also used (b. 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 20, 42, 48). Four of these accents occur on the upbeat to the refrain-like line of each stanza and have an electrifying effect (especially bar 42<sup>4</sup>). The final chord, apart from the accent, is also furnished with a *ffz* which is the strongest dynamic indication in the song.

The song starts with an *f marcato* indication which immediately sets the mood along with the tempo indication in English (and not the usual Italian): "Storming march". The atmosphere presented by the piano part is brisk, excited, pulsating and jovial. Only the section referring to the soldiers being at war deviates from this briefly.

(b) Duration

Metre

The mainly trochaic textual metre is matched with a common-time time-signature with an occasional bar extended by adding an extra crotchet. The result, apart from placing certain words on the strong beat, is a fairly comical march in which some soldier is occasionally out of step as a result of too much revelry and frolicking with the girls. Metre variations are given below:

| Bar | Metre         | No. bars | Total | Reason/s   |
|-----|---------------|----------|-------|--|
| 1   | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 1        | 43    | Marching atmosphere, anticipates textual metre       |
| 2   | $\frac{5}{4}$ | 1        | 5     | Irregularity a comical effect                        |
| 3   | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 3        |       | Marching atmosphere                                  |
| 6   | $\frac{5}{4}$ | 1        |       | Emphasis on "O"                                      |
| 7   | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 9        |       | Textual metre, marching effect, emphasis on "tall"   |
| 16  | $\frac{5}{4}$ | 1        |       | Emphasis on "By"                                     |
| 17  | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 11       |       | Textual metre, marching effect, emphasis on "marvel" |
| 28  | $\frac{5}{4}$ | 1        |       | Emphasis on "Now"                                    |
| 29  | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 9        |       | Textual metre, marching effect, emphasis on "roam"   |
| 38  | $\frac{5}{4}$ | 1        |       | Emphasis on "Falter"                                 |
| 39  | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 10       |       | Textual metre, marching effect, emphasis on "gay"    |

## Rhythm

### Rhythmic motifs

The most prominent motif (motif 1) consists of four quavers (either *legato*, *non-legato* or *staccato*) and occurs 61 times in the piano and vocal parts. Apart from the rhythmic unity it creates, it is the main carrier of the rhythmic activity. Motif 2 is really a variation on the above and consists of a dotted quaver, semi-quaver and two quavers and is often joined to motif 1. It has been derived from the opening vocal line and occurs 26 times in both piano and vocal parts. Motif 3 consists of four *staccato* crotchets (notated as four quavers each followed by a rest) and occurs 14 times in its entirety and a number of times in an incomplete form. This motif, occurring only in the piano part, is largely responsible for the pulsating drive of the song. A short motif, consisting of a quaver and two semi-quavers, occurs 17 times (motif 4) only in the piano part (b. 2, 3, 12(2), 14(2), 15, 16, 22, 24, 32, 34(2), 36, 44, 46 and 47). Finally, a cheeky little motif (two semi-demi-quavers and a dotted quaver tied to a crotchet) which occurs only twice (b. 4 and 48), also deserves attention. The quickness of the first two occasions creates a sense of thrill or vigour immediately before the song starts (b. 4<sup>3</sup>) and reinforces the same sense remaining in the postlude of the song (b. 48<sup>2</sup>).

### Rhythmic activity vs Rhythmic stagnation

The rhythmic activity remains fairly constant throughout, namely that of quaver movement in either piano or voice or both. The piano part slows down once in bar 29 for the sake of allowing the text, "we roam from where the faces smile", to be clear. The piano part also has an increased activity on one occasion (b. 44<sup>3</sup>-45<sup>3</sup>) to semi-quavers with the implication that the excitement is almost out of control as the soldiers look forward to a second meeting with the "Budmouth Dears".

### Rhythmic perceptive, erroneous and interesting settings

The following words have been set perceptively:


  
 b. 12, 44 Esplanade    b. 17-18 troopers even of regiments

### Lengthening of voiced consonants

The following words containing voiced consonants have been rhythmically prolonged in order to make the word more singable:

| Bar            | Duration  | Word   |
|----------------|---|--------|
| 11, 21, 33, 43 | i   | Clink! |
| 12, 44         |  | down   |
| 22, 34         |  | town   |

## Speed

The tempo indication is "Storming march" ♩ = c. 132. There are no deviations from the stated tempo. This fact has a strong influence on the general animation and forward drive in the song.

## (c) Pitch

### Melody

Intervals: Distance distribution:

| Interval | Direction | Number |
|----------|-----------|--------|
| Unison   |           | 16     |
| Second   | up        | 108    |
|          | down      | 40     |
| Third    | up        | 28     |
|          | down      | 28     |
| Fourth   | up        | 4      |
|          | down      | 0      |
| Fifth    | up        | 0      |
|          | down      | 4      |
| Octave   | up        | 0      |
|          | down      | 4      |

There are 16 repeated pitches (or 7% of the total number), 140 rising intervals (or 60%) and 76 falling intervals (or 33%). The smaller intervals (a third and smaller) account for 220 intervals (95% of the total number) while the larger intervals (fourths and larger) account for 12 (or 5%). The stepwise rising intervals are in a large majority (108 out of a possible 232): almost half of all the vocal intervals are rising seconds. With other rising intervals the percentage is raised to 60%. The connection between the rising intervals and the emotional excitement is thereby established.

### Specific settings:

In a context where 95% of the intervals are a third and smaller, specific leaps are significant:

| Interval | Bar | Word/s   | Reason/s                     |
|----------|-----|----------|------------------------------|
| 8th down | 7   | figures  | Emphasis, change of register |
| 4th up   | 12  | and down | Emphasis, to climax          |
| 8th down | 17  | troopers | Emphasis, change of register |
| 4th up   | 22  | the town | Emphasis, to climax          |
| 8th down | 29  | faces    | Emphasis, change of register |

| Interval | Bar | Word/s     | Reason/s                     |
|----------|-----|------------|------------------------------|
| 4th up   | 34  | the town   | Emphasis, to climax          |
| 8th down | 39  | glow again | Emphasis, change of register |
| 4th up   | 44  | and down   | Emphasis, to climax          |

Melodic curve:

A melodic curve of the vocal line is represented below. Certain words are indicated to show the relationship between the melodic curve and the meaning:

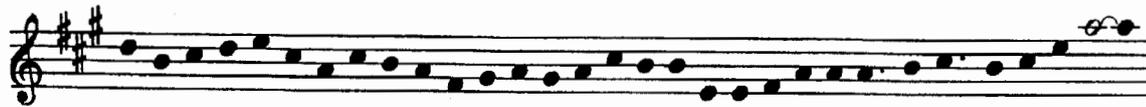
STANZA 1 - 4

- 4. meet
- 3. wonder
- 2. delayed
- 1. Beach

- 4. glow again
- 3. faces
- 2. troopers
- 1. figures



- 4. down
- 3. town
- 2. town
- 1. down



Climaxes

The vocal climaxes of each stanza are given below:

| Bar    | Pitch | Word     |
|--------|-------|----------|
| 7      | A     | town     |
| 12, 44 | A     | down     |
| 17     | A     | figures  |
| 22, 34 | A     | troopers |
| 29     | A     | faces    |
| 39     | A     | glow     |

## Phrase lengths

The four phrases, one for each of the stanzas, are parallel in construction and breathing occurs in the same parallel places. Stanza 1 is given as an example:

Stanza 1 (b, 5-13) Breathe at 6<sup>4</sup>, 8<sup>3</sup> and 10<sup>4</sup>.

## Tonality

The basic key is A major while the song begins and ends in f sharp natural minor which results in a sense of the song being modal. All the transitions between A major and f sharp natural minor are summarized below:

| Bar               | From - To           | Suggested reason/s                                  |
|-------------------|---------------------|---|
| 1                 | f sharp natural min | Captures soldier's march                            |
| 5                 | A maj               | Positive reference to girls                         |
| 25 <sup>4</sup>   | f sharp natural min | Soldiers gone to war                                |
| 29                | A maj               | Pleasant thoughts on the "fair fantastic creatures" |
| 34 <sup>2-3</sup> | f sharp natural min | Variation in the cadence                            |
| 34 <sup>4</sup>   | A maj               | Soldiers anticipate a second meeting                |
| 47 <sup>4</sup>   | f sharp natural min | Return to the opening march                         |

## Chromaticism

There is not a single chromatically altered note in the song. This is possibly because the natural minor key, with its modal connotations, is used and as a result there is no raised leading note.

## Harmony and counterpoint

Many triads containing sevenths are used (b. 11<sup>2</sup>, 12<sup>1</sup>, 13<sup>1</sup>, 14<sup>3</sup>, 16<sup>3&5</sup>, 21<sup>2</sup>, 22<sup>4</sup>, 23<sup>1</sup>, 24<sup>2-3</sup>, 26-28, 29<sup>3</sup>, 30<sup>4</sup>, 31<sup>2</sup>, 32<sup>2</sup>, 33<sup>2</sup>, 34<sup>1</sup>, 35<sup>1&4</sup>, 38<sup>5</sup>, 43<sup>3</sup>, 44<sup>4</sup> and 47<sup>2</sup>). These and ordinary triads are often used in unconventional second inversions. A number of prominent examples of second inversion chords in succession, occur in: bars 11<sup>3-4</sup>, 12<sup>2-3</sup>, 13<sup>2-4</sup>, 16<sup>1-2</sup>, 17<sup>4</sup>-18<sup>2</sup>, 20<sup>2-3</sup> and 23<sup>4</sup>-24<sup>1</sup>.

## Non-harmonic tones

The most prominent non-harmonic tones are the accented passing note (b. 7<sup>4</sup>, 8<sup>4</sup>, 23<sup>2</sup>, 34<sup>4</sup>, 40<sup>4</sup>, 41<sup>3</sup> 45<sup>1</sup> and 46<sup>1</sup>) and the suspension (b. 11<sup>1-3</sup>, 17<sup>1</sup>, 21<sup>1-3</sup> and 33<sup>1-2</sup>). The function is consistent: creating dissonance on the beat in an unchromatic, tonal context.

## Harmonic devices

There is a single example of pedalpoint in bars 25<sup>4</sup> - 28<sup>1</sup>. Though not a long sustained note, the third A below middle C occurs often enough to establish the rumbling drone of a battle or marching in the distance.

## Counterpoint

There is one example of brief canonic imitation between piano and voice in bars 37 - 38, involving the opening motif of the song. The piano furthermore, has short snatches of internal imitation in bars 12<sup>3-4</sup>, 14<sup>3-4</sup> and 34<sup>3-4</sup>.

## (d) Dynamics

Loudness variation is given in the following summary:

### STANZA 1

|         |          |           |               |               |              |                       |
|---------|----------|-----------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Bar no. | 1        | 5         | 6             | 7             | 11           | 12                    |
|         | <i>f</i> | <i>mp</i> | $\Rightarrow$ | $\Rightarrow$ | $\Leftarrow$ | $\Leftarrow$ <i>f</i> |

### STANZA 2

|         |                          |              |              |          |
|---------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Bar no. | 14                       | 16           | 21           | 22       |
|         | <i>dim.</i> ... <i>p</i> | $\Leftarrow$ | $\Leftarrow$ | <i>f</i> |

### STANZA 3

|         |                          |               |              |                       |             |           |               |                  |              |                       |
|---------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Bar no. | 24                       | 27            | 28           | <i>poco cresc.</i> 29 | <i>p</i> 30 | 31        | 32            | <i>cresc.</i> 33 | 34           | <i>f</i>              |
|         | <i>dim.</i> ... <i>p</i> | <i>cresc.</i> | $\Leftarrow$ | <i>f</i>              | <i>dim.</i> | <i>mp</i> | <i>cresc.</i> | $\Leftarrow$     | $\Leftarrow$ | $\Leftarrow$ <i>f</i> |

### STANZA 4

|         |                          |              |              |           |                 |                  |                                  |            |
|---------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| Bar no. | 35                       | 36           | <i>mf</i> 37 | 38        | $\Leftarrow$ 39 | <i>cresc.</i> 43 | <i>down</i> $\vdots$ <i>f</i> 44 | 48         |
|         | <i>dim.</i> ... <i>p</i> | $\Leftarrow$ | $\Leftarrow$ | <i>mf</i> | $\Leftarrow$    | $\Leftarrow$     | $\Leftarrow$ <i>ff</i>           | <i>ffz</i> |

## Frequency

There are 33 indications in 48 bars of the piano part and eight separate indications for voice. This means that most bars contain an indication. Where there are no separate indications for the voice the implication is that the voice should follow the indications given in the piano part.

## Range

The indications range from *p* (b. 16, 27, 36) to *ff* (b. 44) to *ffz* (b. 48), the loudest indication.

## Variety

The indications used are:

*p, mp, mf, f, ff, ffz, cresc., dim.,* 

### Dynamic accents

Dynamic accents occur with regular intervals. Only the stronger accents (>) will be mentioned again. In bars 4 and 48 a vigorous rhythmic motif is accentuated for the sake of prominence. Bars 6<sup>3</sup> and 7<sup>1</sup> contain accents to shift the metre momentarily to <sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub>. Bars 10<sup>4</sup>, 20<sup>4</sup> and 42<sup>4</sup> are parallel moments in the stanza just before the refrain-like final line of each stanza. These accents create a sense of being out of step and provide the song with a strong sense of fun. The accents in bar 11<sup>1-3</sup> coincide with the first occurrences of the words, "Clink! Clink!", and reinforce the onomatopoeic sound effect. The last accent on the final chord, emphasizes the final moment in f sharp natural minor.

### (e) Texture

The density varies loosely between two and seven parts including both piano and voice. The thickness of the piano part is represented in the following table:

| No. of parts | No. of bars | Percentage |
|--------------|-------------|------------|
| 2 parts      | 5           | 10         |
| 3 parts      | 9           | 19         |
| 4 parts      | 10          | 21         |
| 5 parts      | 16          | 33         |
| 6 parts      | 8           | 17         |

The only two-part sections are to be found in the piano introduction (b. 1-4) and part of the last bar (b. 48). The absence of harmony and the indication *marcato* accentuates the anticipated excitement. Six-part piano textures are localized to two places: bar 29 where the two fairly low chords still continue the idea of a battle in the distance and bars 39-47 where the thicker texture enhances the build up of expectancies in the last stanza in which the soldiers look forward to a second meeting after the war. The main texture varies between five and three parts with a slight emphasis on the thicker texture. The thicker texture aptly supports the marching character of the song.

(f) Structure

The structure of the song can be represented by the following table:

|           | Prelude              | Stanza 1 | Interlude            | Stanza 2 |          |
|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Line      |                      | 1-6      |                      | 7-12     |          |
| Bars      | 1-4                  | 5-12     | 13-14                | 15-22    |          |
| No.       | 4                    | 8        | 2                    | 8        |          |
| Phrases   | 2+2                  | 4+4      | 2                    | 4+4      |          |
| Structure | a-----               |          | a'-----              |          |          |
|           | Interlude            | Stanza 3 | Interlude            | Stanza 4 | Postlude |
| Line      |                      | 13-18    |                      | 19-24    |          |
| Bars      | 23-26                | 27-34    | 35-36                | 37-44    | 45-48    |
| No.       | 4                    | 8        | 2                    | 8        | 4        |
| Phrases   | 2+2                  | 4+4      | 2                    | 4+4      | 2+2      |
|           | a <sup>2</sup> ----- |          | a <sup>3</sup> ----- |          | Coda     |

The song is strophic with variations of texture and articulation in the piano part. The only vocal alterations are those which are necessitated by the textual differences.

(g) Mood and atmosphere

The mood of the song is fairly consistent throughout largely as a result of the unaltered tempo that prevails. It has a very strong forward drive suggesting the forward movement of the soldiers' marching. The rough chordal texture and use of *staccato* create the impression that the soldiers are marching on loose gravel. There is a strong sense of exhilaration and anticipation in the song. There is also a slightly ominous mood in bars 24-35 (the third stanza) prior to and in conjunction with the text, "Do they miss us much, I wonder?", when the soldiers have already left for the war.

4.1.3 General comment on style aspects

The song is harmonically mostly tonal and the more modal use of f sharp natural minor is restricted to isolated places. The use of intervals in the vocal part is extremely sympathetic to the voice (95% smaller intervals) and the animated atmosphere is captured masterfully without the use of chromaticism. The rhythmically pulsating drive and scores of 'ripping' chords, accentuated oddly and evenly, vividly conjure up a picture of marching soldiers.

## 4.2 I Said To Love (Poem: I Said To Love)

### 4.2.1 Background to poem:

The poem was first published in *Poems of the Past and the Present* (1901) under the subsection *Miscellaneous Poems* and is undated.

### Poem

#### I Said to Love

|    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 1  | I said to Love,                              | a |
| 2  | 'It is not now as in the old days            | b |
| 3  | When men adored thee and thy ways            | b |
| 4  | All else above;                              | a |
| 5  | Named thee Boy, the Bright, the One          | c |
| 6  | Who spread a heaven beneath the sun'         | c |
| 7  | I said to Love.                              | a |
| 8  | I said to Him,                               | d |
| 9  | 'We now know more of thee than then;         | e |
| 10 | We were but weak in judgement when,          | e |
| 11 | With hearts abrim,                           | d |
| 12 | We clamoured thee that thou would'st please  | f |
| 13 | Inflict on us thine agonies,'                | f |
| 14 | I said to Him.                               | d |
| 15 | I said to Love,                              | g |
| 16 | 'Thou art not young, thou art not fair,      | h |
| 17 | No elfin darts, no cherub air,               | h |
| 18 | Nor swan, nor dove                           | g |
| 19 | Are thine; but features pitiless,            | i |
| 20 | And iron daggers of distress,'               | i |
| 21 | I said to Love.                              | g |
| 22 | 'Depart then Love!...                        | j |
| 23 | - Man's race shall perish, threatenest thou, | k |
| 24 | Without thy kindling coupling-vow?           | k |
| 25 | The age to come the man of now               | k |
| 26 | Know nothing of? -                           | j |
| 27 | We fear not such a threat from thee;         | l |
| 28 | We are too old in apathy!                    | l |
| 29 | <i>Mankind shall cease.</i> - So let it be,' | l |
| 30 | I said to Love.                              | j |

## Content/Meaning

In the poem, Love is personified and the poet addresses him directly. In stanza 1 the poet tells Love that man has become less gullible and more sceptical than in the old days and, as a consequence, no longer has a sentimental, romantic view of love. In stanza 2 he says that man is now wiser and has better judgement than to be tortured by the apparently blissful agonies of romantic love. In stanza 3 he scorns Love describing it as old-fashioned, unfair, false, unkind, pitiless and hurtful. In stanza 4 he orders Love to depart, not only from his own existence but from the existence of humankind. Love, for the first time, has a chance to speak and says that mankind will not procreate without Love bringing couples together. The poet's unyielding answer is that man is already too indifferent to care about his own existence. Mankind may well cease but will no longer yield to the pretentiousness of romantic love.

The message of this poem (or "unadjusted impression" as Hardy calls it in the *Preface to Poems of the Past and the Present*) is that the intellectual advancement of man towards realism, from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries, causes him to be more sceptical and indifferent to the so-called mysteries of romantic love. Love's deceptions of the past have now been exposed by man's more sceptical approach: men are resigned, they will renounce the sentimentality of romantic love even if the human race were to cease to exist as a result.

A somewhat bitter opening tone gives way to a triumphant defiance, challenging traditional points of view.

## Style

The poem is in the style of a soliloquy, quoting a supposed answer from a second party (Love) in the final stanza. There is a strong sense of dramatic development during the course of the poem.

## Form

There are three stanzas consisting of seven lines each, while the fourth consists of nine. The rhyme scheme is rounded – abacca – and the final stanza has an interesting variation: jkkkjlllj. The uneven lengths of the lines follow a pattern (l. 1, 4, 7, 8, 11, 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 26, 30 are short) which creates visual unity. The refrain-like lines, "I said to Love", "I said to Him" (all short lines), help to create semantic unity. The textual metre is mostly iambic although there are some irregular lines mostly in stanzas 1 and 4 (l. 1, 3, 5, 23, 27, 29)

## Synthesis

The very angry and spirited statement by the poet is supported by the imagery used in the poem: "Inflict on us thine agonies", "features pitiless", "iron daggers of distress", "threatenest thou". The refrain-like lines become more and more mocking with each repetition in the dramatic monologue: a fierce attempt to do away with romantic love.

#### 4.2.1 Setting

##### (a) Timbre

##### Voice type/Range

The song is set for baritone and the range is minor tenth from the first C below middle C.

##### Accompaniment characteristics

The extreme ranges of the piano are utilized to accompany the particularly strong statement that the poem makes. Three octaves below and above middle C are used. The latter mostly in the *Quasi candanza* section (b. 50 see example 6). The rest of the accompaniment favours the middle to lower register of the piano (20 of the 70 bars of right hand material are notated in the bass clef). There are no pedal indications implying that the use of the pedal be left to the performer's discretion.

There is no indication of *legato* playing in bars 1 - 11 and the composer's intention with regard to the touch in this section is not clear. Other *legato* indications are clear and specific (b. 12-14, 17-30, 35-39, 53-57). There are no *staccato* indications but *portamento* accents or half *staccato* indications are numerous: bars 16, 33-35, 40-41, 45-47, 57-60, 64-65 and 67-68. Stronger accents are used frequently to coincide with the violent nature of the song ( $\wedge$  10, 33, 35, 44, 46, 48, 49, 68, 69 and  $>$  32, 40, 41 and 50).

The atmosphere of the song is largely carried by the piano accompaniment and closely follows the development of the argument in the text. The C major opening aptly presents the poet's state of mind: modern man is more self-assured, more sceptical and less gullible than his predecessors. The less tonally stable second stanza deals with the "agonies" of romantic love. In the third stanza love is scorned and rejected. The fuzzy tonalities (g minor, E flat major, f minor) are swamped in chromatic alterations and bold dissonance. With the final dismissal of Love in bar 49, the scene is set for a cataclysmic tirade in bar 50 (*Quasi cadenza*). This atonal, double octave passage marked *ff deliberato pesante*, with an accent ( $>$ ) on every note, is unmatched in Finzi's output and, as such, allows for some speculation. It is clear enough that the passage portrays the anger of both poet and composer, directed at the fallacies of romantic love as exalted in the nineteenth century. It seems, however, on careful reflection, that the passage also shows the composer's agonized realization of what a world devoid of real love would be like. It is not only anger but also despair and disillusionment that is portrayed here. The rest of stanza four takes on a defiant quality in which the destruction of mankind is preferred above the falseness of romantic love. The postlude returns to a powerful (*fff violento*) c minor tonality, rounding off the song by referring to the opening tonality but with a sardonic modal twist.

(b) Duration

Metre

The textual metre is mainly iambic and this is matched with a common-time time-signature in 87% of the bars.

The following table serves as a summary of the metric activity in the song:

| Bar | Metre         | No. of Bars | Total | Suggested reason/s                       |
|-----|---------------|-------------|-------|--|
| 1   | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 8           | 61    | Iambic textual metre                     |
| 9   | $\frac{3}{4}$ | 2           | 4     | Prolong "above"                          |
| 11  | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 35          |       | Emphasis on "Boy"                        |
| 46  | $\frac{3}{4}$ | 2           |       | Intensifies movement towards climax      |
| 48  | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 2           |       | Pause - bar prolonged                    |
| 50  | -             | 1           | 1     | No time-signature - <i>Quasi cadenza</i> |
| 51  | $\frac{5}{4}$ | 1           | 2     | Piano chord before voice enters          |
| 52  | $\frac{3}{2}$ | 1           | 1     | Parenthesis - bar extended               |
| 53  | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 5           |       | Emphasis on "without"                    |
| 58  | $\frac{5}{4}$ | 1           |       | Emphasis on "fear"                       |
| 59  | $\frac{7}{4}$ | 1           | 1     | Emphasis on "thee"                       |
| 60  | $\frac{4}{4}$ | 11          |       | Emphasis on "apathy"                     |

The metric changes occur mostly to allow the musical rhythm to follow the natural speech rhythm as closely as possible (b. 51, 59, 59).

Rhythm

Rhythmic motifs

Rhythmic motifs do not play an important role in the song. There are, however, a number of rhythmic ideas that recur. Motif 1 consisting of two minims, mainly used as bass notes, occurs 25 times in the piano part and once in the vocal part. Motif 2 consisting of either four quavers or a quaver rest and three quavers occurs 26 times in the piano part and once in the vocal part but only from the second stanza. The rhythmic augmentation of motif 2, namely four crotchets, occurs 11 times only in the piano part (motif 3). The last motif of significance (motif 4) accompanies the refrain-like words, "I said to Love" (and variations) and occurs five times in the vocal part and six times in the piano part, throughout the song.

### Rhythmic activity vs Rhythmic stagnation

The rhythmic activity follows the dramatic development of the argument very closely. The opening, during which the initial statements are made, is rhythmically fairly static. Stanza 2, (b. 17-30) dealing with the "agonies" of romantic love, is much more active. The third stanza, exposing Love's fallacies, has more activity than the first stanza but less than the second. The final stanza opens with the *Quasi cadenza* section, during which the rhythmic activity peaks. The final section of the song, in terms of rhythmic movement, is reminiscent of the opening section.

Rhythmically perceptive, erroneous and interesting settings:

The following words and phrases have been set perceptively.

b. 2-3 (14-15, 43-44, 65-66) I said to Love      b. 13 heaven

b.27 agonies      b. 37 cherub air      b. 40 features      b. 41 pitiless

b. 42-43 iron daggers of distress      b. 52 perish threatenest thou

b. 54 coupling vow      b. 60 apathy

### Lengthening of voiced consonants

The following words containing voiced consonants have been rhythmically prolonged in order to make the words more singable:

| Bar   | Duration | Word |
|-------|----------|------|
| 15    |          | Love |
| 19-20 |          | then |
| 29-30 |          | Him  |
| 31-33 |          | Love |
| 66    |          | Love |

### Speed

The tempo indication is *Allegro* ♩ = c. 126. Tempo deviations are numerous and are listed below:

| Bar | Deviation         | Bar | Return                           | Suggested reason/s                   |
|-----|-------------------|-----|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 16  | <i>allargando</i> | 17  | <i>Poco più mosso</i> ♩ = c. 144 | Argument intensifies - second stanza |
| 27  | <i>ritard.</i>    | 29  | <i>a tempo</i>                   | Anticipates end of phrase            |

| Bar   | Deviation                             | Bar   | Return             | Suggested reason/s        |
|-------|---------------------------------------|-------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 45    | <i>allargando</i>                     | 48-49 | <i>Libiramente</i> | Anticipates climax        |
| 50    | <i>Quasi cadenza</i>                  | 50    | <i>accel.</i>      | Dramatic intensity        |
| 51    | <i>Tempo del principio</i><br>♩ = 126 |       |                    | Final stanza              |
| 57-58 | <i>un poco pesantemente</i>           | 62    | <i>a tempo</i>     | Emphasis of meaning       |
| 67    | <i>ritard. molto</i>                  | 68    | <i>a tempo</i>     | Reinforce final statement |

The tempo deviations are functional in relation to the meaning of the text.

(c) Pitch

Melody

Intervals: Distance distribution:

| Interval | Direction  | Number   |
|----------|------------|----------|
| Unison   |            | 52       |
| Second   | up    down | 26<br>35 |
| Third    | up    down | 19<br>12 |
| Fourth   | up    down | 11<br>8  |
| Fifth    | up    down | 5<br>8   |
| Sixth    | up    down | 2<br>2   |
| Seventh  | up    down | 1<br>0   |
| Octave   | up    down | 2<br>1   |

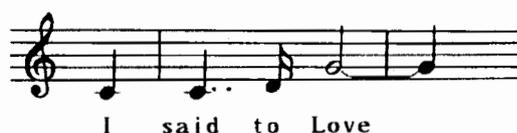
There are 52 repeated pitches (or 28% of the total number), 66 rising intervals (or 36%) and 66 falling intervals (or 36%). The smaller intervals (a third and smaller) account for 144 intervals (78% of the total number) while the larger intervals (fourths and larger) account for 40 (or 22%). This breakdown shows that the vocal material of the song, in spite of the angry content, is still sympathetic towards the voice. The following specific setting involves larger intervals:

| Interval        | Bar no. | Word/s                 | Reason/s                            |
|-----------------|---------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 6th up          | 5-6     | When men               | Emphasis                            |
| 7th up          | 28-29   | to Him                 | Emphasis, reinforce emotional state |
| 6th up & down   | 11-12   | Bright, the One        | Reinforce meaning: excitement       |
| 8th up          | 41-42   | And iron               | Emphasis, reinforce meaning         |
| 5th up          | 48-49   | Depart                 | Emphasis, reinforce meaning: scorn  |
| 8th down        | 52      | perish,<br>threatenest | Change of register, parenthesis     |
| 4th up & 4th up | 58-59   | from thee; We          | Emphasis                            |
| 8th up          | 62-63   | shall cease            | Emphasis, reinforce emotional state |

The setting of the refrain-like words "I said to Love", "I said to Him" and "Depart then Love" undergoes a number of transformations, although the main direction of each motif remains upward. A summary of the intervallic development in relation to the emotional content is given below. The relation between larger melodic intervals and stronger emotional expression is here unequivocally established.

**Setting of refrain-like motifs:**

**STANZA 1**



**STANZA 2**



**STANZA 3**



**STANZA 4**



Melodic curve

A melodic curve of the vocal line is represented below. Some words are indicated to show the relationship between the melodic curve and the meaning:

STANZA 1

Two staves of musical notation. The first staff shows a melodic line with a dotted line connecting the word "Named" to a specific note. The second staff continues the melodic line with a dotted line connecting the word "spread" to a specific note.

STANZA 2

Two staves of musical notation. The first staff shows a melodic line with dotted lines connecting the words "more" and "abrim" to specific notes. The second staff continues the melodic line with a dotted line connecting the word "Him" to a specific note.

STANZA 3

Two staves of musical notation. The first staff shows a melodic line with a dotted line connecting the word "elfin" to a specific note. The second staff continues the melodic line.

STANZA 4

Two staves of musical notation. The first staff shows a melodic line. The second staff shows a melodic line with dotted lines connecting the words "cease" and "So" to specific notes.

## Climaxes

The three vocal climaxes are given below:

| Bar | Pitch  | Word  |
|-----|--------|-------|
| 36  | E flat | elfin |
| 63  | E flat | cease |
| 64  | E flat | so    |

The first climax occurs in stanza 2, during which the idea is introduced not only that romantic Love (personified) can inflict agonies, but also that men formerly begged Love to do so, and this is ridiculed by Hardy. The other two climactic pitches occur adjacent to one another and should really be seen as one climax at the moment when it is clear that the poet prefers the destruction of mankind to the falseness of romantic love; a thought-provoking conviction even today, let alone in 1901 on first publication.

## Phrase lengths

Each of the four stanzas establishes a complete phrase but breaks will be necessary for the sake of breathing:

- Stanza 1 (b. 2-16)     Breathe in bars 7, 9 and 14
- Stanza 2 (b. 17-30)     Breathe in bars 20, 22, and 27
- Stanza 3 (b. 31-45)     Breathe in bars 35, 39 and 43
- Stanza 4 (b. 49-67)     Subphrases are separated by rests

## Tonality

The song begins in C major and ends in c minor. Between these two fairly stable keys are a number of less stable tonal manifestations. The extended bar 50 is certainly atonal and the rest can be described as examples of extended tonality where a key is discernable but it shifts freely. All "modulations" are summarized below:

| Bar   | From - To         | Suggested reason/s                 |
|-------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1-21  | C major           | Set of argument                    |
| 21-30 | G - D - G major   | Reinforce meaning: "agonies"       |
| 31-35 | g min             | Reinforce meaning: scorn           |
| 35-39 | E flat major      | Reinforce meaning: defiance        |
| 40-50 | f minor - F major | Reinforce meaning: "iron daggers"  |
| 50    | Atonal            | Consequences of "Depart then Love" |

| Bar   | From - To | Suggested reason/s                  |
|-------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| 51-56 | f minor   | Reinforce atmosphere: grimness      |
| 56-70 | c minor   | Establish relationship with opening |

## Chromaticism

Chromaticism plays an important role in the song. It enhances the meaning of a text filled with anger and disillusionment. The following summary shows the widespread occurrence from the eleventh bar and the extent to which the composer is prepared to change certain chords for the sake of the dissonance he requires at a particular moment.

| Bar | Beat | Key              | Chord/Note   | Suggested reason/s                                    |
|-----|------|------------------|--|---|
| 11  | 1    | C maj            | iv (A flat)  | Soften sound on "Boy"                                 |
| 12  | 1-2  | C maj            | vii (B flat)   | Piano part reinforces meaning of the text             |
| 25  | 3    | D maj            | iv <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> (C)                                     | Pleading tone set with minor chord                    |
| 28  | 2    | G maj            | D# - suspension  | Harmonic emphasis - dissonance                        |
| 31  | 1    | g min            | Ger <sup>6</sup> add aug 2nd   | Foreshadows the criticism of Love, disgust with Love  |
| 33  | 4    | g min            | V <sup>6</sup> (C#)  | Emphasis on negative qualities                        |
| 34  | 1    | g min            | V <sup>7</sup> add dim 5th   | Emphasis on negative qualities                        |
| 42  | 1    | f min            | V add min 2nd  | Reinforce meaning: "iron daggers"                     |
| 42  | 3    | f min            | VII add maj 2nd  | Reinforce meaning: "iron daggers"                     |
| 45  | 3-4  | f min            | Two chords from f# min superimposed: I* & III                        | Heightened dissonance - anticipates dismissal of Love |
| 50  |      | Atonal           | Free melodic chromaticism  | What the world would be like in the absence of love   |
| 52  | 1    | f min            | I (A natural) superimposed on I <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> from B maj | Word-painting of "perish" - dissonance                |
| 60  | 1-2  | f min            | C flat, B double flat  | Word-painting of "apathy" - dissonance                |
| 63  | 1    | c min/E flat maj | iv <sup>7</sup> with dim 5th   | Reinforce meaning: "cease"                            |

## Harmony and counterpoint

The harmonic usage in the song is venturesome and novel. (The table above highlights some of the significant examples.)

## Non-harmonic tones

Non-harmonic tones of significance occur mostly on the beat and thus create sharper dissonance. There are accented passing notes (b. 3<sup>1</sup>), accented *appoggiaturas* (b. 4, 29 and 56) and suspensions (b. 6, 7, 26, 27-28 and 54).



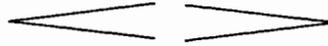
## Range

Dynamic indications range from *p* (b. 40) to *fff violento* (b. 68).

## Variety

The indications used are:

*p, mp, mf, f, ff, fff, cresc., dim.*



## Dynamic accents

Accents have already been listed earlier and it will suffice to reiterate their importance in the song. The entire *Quasi cadenza* (b. 50) is marked *ff deliberato, pesante* and each note is furnished with an accent (>). Accents coincide with important textual considerations and instances where the emotional implications are reinforced in the piano part.

## (e) Texture

The density varies loosely between one (b. 31) and nine (b. 49) parts including both piano and voice. The thickness of the piano part is represented in the following table:

| No. of parts | No. of bars | Percentage |
|--------------|-------------|------------|
| 0 parts      | 1           | 1.5        |
| 2 parts      | 2           | 3          |
| 3 parts      | 9           | 13         |
| 4 parts      | 19          | 27         |
| 5 parts      | 17          | 24         |
| 6 parts      | 19          | 27         |
| 7 parts      | 2           | 3          |
| 8 parts      | 1           | 1.5        |

The four- to six-part piano texture dominates (accounts for 78% of the bars). This thick texture along with the fairly loud dynamic indications enhances the high emotional intensity prevalent in the song.

(f) Structure

The structure of the song is represented in the following table:

|           |           |          |             |           |          |          |
|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|----------|
|           | Prelude   | Stanza 1 | Link        | Stanza 2  | Link     | Stanza 3 |
| Line      |           | 1-7      |             | 8-14      |          | 15-21    |
| Bars      | 1-2       | 3-15     | 16          | 17-29     | 30       | 31-44    |
| No.       | 2         | 11       | 1           | 13        | 1        | 14       |
| Phrases   | 2         | 3+4+6    | 1           | 4+4+5     | 1        | 5+4+5    |
| Structure | a-----    |          |             | b-----    |          |          |
|           | Interlude | Stanza 4 | Interlude   | Stanza 4  | Postlude |          |
| Line      |           | 22       |             | 23-30     |          |          |
| Bars      | 45-48     | 49       | 50          | 51-66     | 67-70    |          |
| No.       | 4         | 1        | 1(extended) | 16        | 4        |          |
| Phrases   | 4         | 1        | 1           | 4+3+3+4+2 | 2+2      |          |
|           | c-----    |          | d-----      |           |          |          |

The song is through-composed and the only recurring material is the refrain-like setting of the words "I said to Love" (and the variants thereof). The dramatic development of the argument is a sufficiently strong directional drive to ensure the song's musical coherence.

(g) Mood and atmosphere

The atmosphere created in the song relies heavily on the piano part and follows the development of the poem very carefully. The opening stanza contains a controlled statement against the old-fashioned views on romantic love. The composer uses tonal harmony, slow-moving and fairly dense chords to achieve a self-assured mood. A more chromatic, quicker-moving, thinner second stanza deals with the formerly coveted agonies of love. The mood is ironic and dismissive. In the third stanza the nature of Love is exposed, derided and rejected. The composer sets an angry mood full of scorn through the use of fuzzy, extended tonality, bold dissonance, dramatically varying dynamic levels and an erratic rhythmic flow. The only real interlude in the song, bar 50, becomes a powerful reiteration of the text, "Depart then, Love!". The final stanza vaguely recalls the opening, not in actual material but in the atmosphere of self-assurance which develops into an unyielding defiance. The tonality gravitates towards c minor through the subdominant minor, f minor, clinching the argument with the doom-laden words:

*"Mankind shall cease. - So let it be,"*

#### 4.2.4 General comment on style aspects

The style exhibited in this song, though containing most of the Finzi's characteristic traits (sympathetic vocal writing, tonal harmony, accurate atmosphere setting), also shows Finzi as a bold experimenter with musical colour and formal structure. The exploration of register and dissonance in the piano part takes on powerfully dramatic proportions while the through-composed structure of the song is carefully balanced with refrain-like recollections of melodic and rhythmic motifs. The *Quasi cadenza* section is unique in Finzi's output and certainly a significant feat in musical expression in the song literature of the fifties.

### 4.3 Summary

This chapter shows the methodology adopted and procedures followed while analysing the songs. The philosophies and circumstances which prompted the poet to write the poems were explored as far as these are appropriate to the study. The poems themselves were scrutinized. In turn, the composer's attitude was considered and only then was an analysis of the score attempted. The analysis follows a model based on the seven basic elements of music:

- (a) Timbre
- (b) Duration (metre, rhythm, speed)
- (c) Pitch (melody, tonality, harmony)
- (d) Dynamics
- (e) Texture
- (f) Structure
- (g) Mood and atmosphere

In each case a short summary is provided which makes a general comment on the composer's compositional style. These findings are then synthesized and presented in the present volume.

## CHAPTER 5

### Timbre

The term **Timbre** is considered here in its broadest possible sense, namely the significance of the different tone-colours (voice, piano, string quartet, small orchestra) which manifest themselves in Finzi's setting of the Hardy poems.

#### 5.1 Vocal Timbre

##### 5.1.1 Tenor voice

The tenor voice is specifically indicated for ten of the songs from *A Young Man's Exhortation, ten songs for tenor and piano* (Op. 14), published 1933. The other eight songs specified more vaguely "for high voice" (which could be classified as in the tenor category) come from volumes published posthumously. The editors, Howard Ferguson, Joyce Finzi and Christopher Finzi, grouped these in *Till Earth Outwears, seven songs for high voice and piano* (Op. 19a), published 1958 and the single Hardy song, "I Say I'll Seek Her" from *Oh Fair To See, seven songs for high voice and piano* (Op. 13b), published 1965. The editors take a more 'modern' approach in not specifying the sex of the performer. These songs have not been recorded by sopranos. According to an editorial note which appears in the two posthumous collections, the only Hardy poem to be transposed securing it for 'high voice', is the final song in the set *Till Earth Outwears*, "Life Laughs Onwards". The editors continue:

The composer himself was uncertain whether the [song] should be for Baritone or Tenor; so the editors have felt justified in making the transposition in order to fit the [song] into the [set] concerned. (1965:ii)

The tenor voice – traditionally associated with youthful musical characters – is particularly suitable for Part I (the first five songs) of *A Young Man's Exhortation* which carries the subtitle "Mane floreat, et transeat. Ps. 89" (In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up) and deals with youthful, amorous moods. Part II's subtitle: "Vespere dedicat, induret, et arescat. Ps. 89" (In the evening it is cut down and withereth) is retrospective from the vantage point of old age. The higher voice timbre, in the second part, does not in any way distract from the meaning or atmosphere. The lowest notated pitch (sounding an octave lower, of course) is middle C, the highest the second A above middle C. The composer occasionally provides the extreme limits of the vocal part with alternatives to accommodate a less able performer (b. 10 of *A Young Man's Exhortation*, b. 7, 17, 29, 39 of *Budmouth Dears* and b. 29 of *The Dance Continued*). The other Hardy songs (from *Till Earth Outwears* and *Oh Fair To See*) are mostly suitable for tenor voice, except perhaps,

"I Look into My Glass" with the obviously aged weariness suggested in the text. Stephen Banfield, in his comprehensive study of the English song, *Sensibility and English Song*, argues that the songs collected in *Till Earth Outwears* were originally intended for *A Young Man's Exhortation*, in a slightly larger envisaged scope:

By the time of publication in 1933 the cycle had lost five of its fifteen songs. These five may be among the ten incomplete manuscript sketches surviving from the 1920s...But it is more likely to have included some of the songs which were eventually published in the two posthumous sets, of which 'A market-girl (1927), 'Two Lips' (1928), 'At a lunar eclipse' (1929), 'I say I'll seek her'(1929) are known to date from this period. (1985:291)

Most of the subject matter is certainly suitable and it may well explain the tenor setting of these songs. The upper and lower limits remain unchanged. The tenor timbre also exploring pitches as low as the notated middle C (sounding an octave lower) is, in the main, suited to the text.

#### 5.1.2 Baritone voice

The vast majority of the Hardy songs (27) are specified for baritone voice: *By Footpath And Stile* (Op. 2), published 1925, *Earth And Air And Rain* (Op. 15), published 1936, *Before And After Summer* (Op. 16), published 1949, and a single song, "Only A Man Harrowing Clods" from *Requiem da Camera* (Op. Posth.) recorded in 1991. One set of songs was collected and grouped by Finzi's editors posthumously and specified for "low voice", namely *I Said To Love, six songs for low voice and piano* (Op. 19b), published in 1958 and is really for baritone as well.

The baritone range is extended in a number of songs where the second F or F sharp above middle C (sounding an octave lower) is required. In most such cases the composer provides alternatives as cue notes to accommodate the less able performer (b. 62 of *For Life I Never Cared Greatly*, b. 14-5 of *Exeunt Omnes*, b. 123 of *The Master And The Leaves*, b. 15-6 and 19 *The Clock Of The Years* and b. 65-6 of *Channel Firing*). The vocal range of the first three songs from *By Footpath And Stile* is extremely limited hardly venturing outside an octave, a weakness in these early songs.

The darker timbre of the baritone voice is suited to most of the poems, especially those with dramatic content: "The Clock Of The Years", "Channel Firing", "He Abjures Love", "I Said To Love". In "Channel Firing" the performer, furthermore, has the opportunity to vary the timbre of his own voice while portraying the different characters (narrator, God, skeletons) because of the selection of the vocal register by the composer.

## 5.2 Piano Timbre

The modern piano's range consists of just over seven octaves. Within this compass a wide variety of sonorities and timbres are possible through the combination or exclusion of certain registers. Traditionally, lower registers are associated with warmer, more dramatic sonorities while higher registers are associated with colder, more phlegmatic atmospheres. The middle register, roughly the compass covered by the grand staff without the use of ledger lines, is usually associated with more neutral circumstances suggested in the text or the setting of more restrained emotional situations. These are just the very broad outlines and a composer is, of course, free to combine any of the above-mentioned registers to achieve the particular sonority and timbre which is required for the context.

### 5.2.1 Middle register

Finzi's use of piano timbre is closely linked with the meaning and atmosphere of the text. The most prominent register which he employs is middle to low (the treble clef without ledger lines to the bass clef with up to two or three ledger lines below the staff). No fewer than twenty songs with a variety of atmospheres, are set in this 'comfortable' register (*Her Temple*, *The Dance Continued*, *Overlooking A River*, *Amabel* and *I Look Into My Glass*). There are a number of songs which have a more deliberately restricted range (*To Lizbie Brown*, *Proud Songsters* and *It Never Looks Like Summer Here*). The concentration of the accompaniment material in the middle register of the piano, consciously avoiding the extreme registers, reflects an emotional restraint. In the retrospective poem, "To Lizbie Brown" the persona in advanced years regrets the loss of what might have been a love-relationship. This sensitive, very private confession is set by Finzi with the utmost restraint. There is, furthermore, a single chromatically altered pitch in the song consisting of sixty six bars. In focusing the piano timbre on the middle register, the emotional restraint of the poem is captured.

### 5.2.2 Middle register with exception

There are a number of songs which employ mostly a middle register but for specific purposes related to the text, touch on an extreme register (*I Say I'll Seek Her*, *Shortening Days*, *Rollicum-Rorum*, *The Self-Unseeing* and *For Life I Never Cared Greatly*). The poem "I Say I'll Seek Her" deals with the withdrawal of the beloved: the lover plans to visit his beloved; she expects him and has prepared for his arrival secretly but he does not go. In the setting a high piano sonority accompanies the lover's positive intention but, as it becomes

clear that he hesitates to leave, the piano material gravitates lower and lower. The beloved's understandable emotional reaction is again set in a higher range but, even as she realizes the inevitable, the piano timbre shrinks to a single e minor triad before the final stanza expressing the disillusionment of her wait.

Example 1 I Say 'I'll Seek Her' Bars 1 - 4

Fast. In modo appassionato [♩ = 72]

VOICE

I say, "I'll seek her side Ere hin-drance in - ter - po - ses;" But

PIANO

*ff* *dim*

*ritardando*

eve in mid-night clo - ses, And here I

- in - u - en - do

A second example comes from the song "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly". The poem of the same title deals with the persona's indifference to life. Neither aloofness nor active participation in the pleasures of life brought the persona any lasting joy until "Life", in the final section of the poem, showed him a star by which he could be guided on his pilgrimage through life. The composer sets the first fifty five bars of the song in a restrained, neutral middle register hardly moving outside the confines of the grand staff (except for some doubled bass notes in bars 4-8). In the final stanza where the significance of the spiritual enlightenment is fully realized, the piano sonority first deepens but eventually reaches exuberant proportions in the last four bars of the song and ends on a six-part chord that stretches over more than four octaves.

Example 2 For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly Bars 64 - 67

The musical score for Example 2, 'For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly' (Bars 64-67), is presented in three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, written in G major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are 'pil - - - - - grimage fail.....'. The middle staff is the right-hand piano accompaniment, and the bottom staff is the left-hand piano accompaniment. The score includes a 'rall.' marking above the vocal line and a 'ff' dynamic marking at the end of the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes in the right hand and block chords in the left hand.

### 5.2.3 Register variation

The most interesting songs in terms of piano timbre are: "Budmouth Dears", "The Comet At Yell'ham", "Waiting Both", "Channel Firing", "The Too Short Time", "At A Lunar Eclipse" and "I Said To Love". The special timbre qualities of each of these will be discussed in turn.

"Budmouth Dears" and "Rollicum-Rorum" are the two jolliest settings of Hardy poems. Both have the Napoleonic war as backdrop and are soldier's songs with a marching metre. The poem, "Budmouth Dears" is the song of a certain young hussar, who pays homage – on behalf of his regiment – to the beauties of Budmouth from whom, reading between the lines, they received more than a side-ways look. The first two stanzas portray the frivolous attempts of the military to attract the attention of these girls, especially while parading up and down the esplanade. In the second and third stanzas, the soldiers are in a less desirable position in France. Here, at the front, it is the thought of these "fair fantastic creatures" that keeps them going and the soldiers nostalgically hope that there might be a second meeting after the war. Finzi uses the piano sonority to achieve these varying atmospheres. In the opening four bars a spiky melody is placed three octaves apart as a single line in the treble and bass clefs respectively. The wide range and sparseness results in a jovial atmosphere. Soon thicker textures, still spread over a wide compass, continue to provide a masculine background for the soldier's song. During the short interlude prior to the third stanza, a low sonority is exploited with the right hand material temporarily notated in the bass clef. The implication is that the rumble of a not-too-distant battle is suggested.

Example 3 Budmouth Dears Bars 24 - 28

At the start of the fourth stanza the piano material returns to the middle range briefly but soon enough (from bar 42) recalls the extremities of the first stanza and reaches new heights on the final vocal climax. The treble clef material, especially, gives the impression of the fervour with which the soldiers treasure the hope of being re-united with the "Budmouth Dears".

The poems "The Comet at Yell'ham", "Waiting Both" and "At A Lunar Eclipse" are linked thematically by virtue of references to the immensity of the stellar universe and man's comparative puniness. Finzi, in his setting of these poems, honours this thematic link by employing similar timbres and sonorities in the three songs. The first poem was possibly inspired by Hardy's observation of Tebbutt's Comet (25 June 1881) which was expected to appear again in the fourth millennium (Seymour-Smith 1994:278). This sensitive description of the comet's passing elicits thoughts on man's finite existence in contrast to the seemingly infinite universe. The haunting simplicity of the poem understates the weighty complexity of man's existential crisis at the end of the nineteenth century. Finzi's response is equally sensitive. The setting opens and closes in the extremely high register, the left hand material notated in the treble clef for the first two-and-a-half systems and virtually the entire final system. The middle section of the song is accompanied by material that reaches lower and lower until on the final vocal pitch, the third C below middle C is reached. Finzi's dramatic outline is clear: the piano timbre follows the progress of an imaginary comet from a distance, starting infinitely far off (extremely high register) to the point from which the human observer stands (middle to extremely low register) and again away into the infinite distance. The extremely high register carries associations of coldness, distance and strangeness while the middle and low registers are associated with the immediate, finite human existence.

Example 4 The Comet At Yell'ham Systems 1 and 7

The image displays two systems of a musical score. System 1 consists of a voice line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Lento' with a metronome marking of quarter note = c. 42. The piano part is marked 'ppp molto sostenuto e legato'. System 7 shows the vocal line ending with a 'ten.' (tenuto) and the piano part ending with 'ritardando - niente'.

In the poem "Waiting Both", the emphasis is slightly different in that there is actually a conversation between the persona and the star. The outcome of the conversation is that, in spite of the enormous differences between them, their predicament as natural phenomena is essentially the same: each is uncertain of its place and purpose in the universe. A similar timbre-outline is followed in this song initially but there is an important departure from it. The closing bars descend into the depths of despair, corresponding with the perception of the predicament. The four opening bars have the same cold and strange sonority, the treble clef sounding two octaves above middle C and the left hand material notated in the treble clef. Immediately following the vocal climax (in bar 19), the piano material, by now entirely notated in the bass clef, displays the frustration of the man's sense of isolation, incompleteness and inability to realize his latent potential. The star, in the passage in which it agrees with these sentiments, is symbolized by the treble clef in the high register while man's emotional turmoil is displayed in the bass clef material which ascends chromatically at the same time.

In the third poem, "At a Lunar Eclipse", Hardy is at the height of his poetic power with acute description of a natural phenomenon used as a basis for philosophical musing about the relationship of man and earth to the universe. Finzi's setting of this poem opens in the extremely low register, as Hardy addresses the earth in the first line of the poem. By the third system the attention has shifted to the moon's "imperturbable serenity" (line four) and the treble clef material of the piano accompaniment has reached the third octave above middle C. The reference in the second stanza to the earth's "moil and misery" (line eight) is followed by a brief piano

interlude which descends to the third octave below middle C. The low register is largely retained towards the end of the song except for a very wide range employed with the reference to the world's obsession with war and the beauty of women.

The poem "Channel Firing" was written a few months before the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 and, in Hardy's own words, was 'prophetic' (Hardy 1930:161). The narrator, one of the dead from the underworld, addresses the war-mongering human race. God appears on the scene and reassures the narrator and the other skeletons that the disturbance to their rest was occasioned by the Royal Navy's gunnery practice in the English Channel. God then upbraids the human race for its cruelty, warns that the hour of Judgement will be more calamitous than they can conceive and proclaims that men are in dire need of eternal rest. Upon God's departure, the skeletons have a conversation amongst themselves in which they express their scepticism about man ever changing his ways. A certain parson rejects religion by suggesting one should enjoy the pleasures of life as long as one is able. Just then, the manoeuvres recommence again with a vengeance at such a pitch that the disturbance penetrates deeper into the country than before - threatening to destroy civilization. The dramatic possibilities for setting this text to music are clear and Finzi embraced the challenge in 1940, in the early part of the Second World War (1939-45). The macabre atmosphere in which the poem is set exploits the extremely low register of the piano. It starts on the C, three octaves below middle C, and returns to it twice in the opening of the song, five times during the course of the song and six times in the last six bars. The treble clef material is notated in the bass clef in 23 of the 81 bars and there are only two occasions on which the material is notated in ledger lines above the treble clef stave; first, in conjunction with the black-humoured reference to skeletons shaking their heads in disbelief at the suggestion that man might amend his ways; and second, at the reference to "starlit Stonehenge", symbol of the ancient, spiritual centre of England. The piano timbre is the single most powerful tool at the composer's disposal and he makes full use of it.

There seems to have been some doubt in Hardy's mind about the title of the poem, "The Best She Could". The MS contains two other possibilities, "The Too Short Time" and "The Fall of the Leaf", the first of which Finzi used as his song title. The poem is wholly pastoral and summer is personified as a proud and splendidly dressed woman. Nature, knowing full well what the inevitable outcome of its cyclic existence will be, spares nothing during its magnificent summer show. Hardy sees in this one of the most ironic mysteries of the universe: that nature, in the wake of such splendour, readily and without question accepts its own demise and returns in full force the next season. The most significant aspect of the setting is to be found in the first three

systems of the song of which the first two are for piano solo. A single-part, treble clef melodic line opens the setting on the third A above middle C and ambles down three octaves to come to rest on the first A below middle C and remains as a pedal note for roughly five bars. A similar, curiously varied melody takes over when the first comes to rest, from approximately the same pitch level. A third and fourth melody mockingly imitates at the moment of the second's attaining rest. This unusual setting makes perfect sense when the voice enters with a significantly shrunken version of the same motif, carrying the text: "Nine leaves a minute \ Swim down shakily". Again, it is exploiting the piano's timbre through the fall of three octaves which renders this setting uniquely effective.

Example 5 The Too Short Time Bars 1 - 8

The musical score for 'The Too Short Time' (Bars 1-8) is presented in three systems. The first system is marked 'Andante' with a tempo of '♩ = c. 60' and 'pp senza rigore'. It features a treble clef melody with triplets and a bass clef accompaniment. The second system continues the piano solo with similar melodic and harmonic patterns. The third system is marked 'Quasi recitativo' and includes the vocal line with lyrics: 'Nine leaves a min-ute ..... Swim down shak-i-ly;.....'. The piano accompaniment continues with triplets and a steady bass line.

In the second stanza (from bar 21) the slow demise of autumn is accompanied by a much lower sonority. The bass part now reaches down to more than three octaves below middle C while the right hand material hardly rises higher than the first A above middle C. The lower sonority has a twofold function: the last warmth of autumn, as the season of harvest, is recalled while the daunting advent of winter is solemnly anticipated.

The final example of Finzi's manipulation of extremes of timbre is to be found in his last setting of a Hardy poem, "I Said To Love". Stephen Banfield quotes Joy Finzi's journal in *Chapter XIII of Sensibility and English Song*:

Finzi finished the song on 12 July 1956, and two days later Joy coolly noted in her journal: 'G's 55th birthday. G went through the new five Hardy songs etc., which he has written at various times during the last few months. "I said to Love" he has just finished. More violent than some of the recent ones.' It was his last Hardy song; He died ten weeks later (1985:299)

The poet makes a vehement attack on the personified romantic Love. He makes it clear that man is less gullible and more sceptical in the new century (the poem being published in 1901) than formerly and as a consequence does not take kindly to the sentimentality of old-fashion pretence. Love protests that mankind shall become extinct without his aid to which the poet angrily retorts that man is already indifferent as to his own existence and would rather it cease than yield again to the pretentiousness of romantic Love. This angry statement is set in compatible fearless musical language. The extreme lower register of the piano is employed for the opening statement, signifying the gravity for the matter. A fairly low compass is retained for the next 28 bars during which Love's fallacies are one by one exposed and dismissed. The tirade continues, now accompanied in the middle register up to the climactic command in bars 48-49: "Depart then, Love" (l. 22). The cataclysmic *Quasi cadenza* (b. 50) which follows immediately, sweeps through the entire piano range in a matter of 30 crotchet beats (roughly eight common-time bars), with a vengeance unheard of in any of Finzi's other song accompaniments (if not his entire output). This atonal, double octave passage marked, *ff deliberato, pesante* with a strong accent (>) on each note and ranging from the third C below to the third C above middle C, allows for some speculation about the meaning of it all. It is clear enough that the passage portrays the anger of poet and composer directed at romantic Love as idealized and exalted in the nineteenth century. It seems that the passage, devoid of text, could be a private statement by the composer expressing the horror of a world devoid of real love. So not only anger but also post-war disillusionment and the stark reality of his own the imminent death is portrayed. What remains of the final stanza is set in a predominantly low register, recalling the material and register of the opening.

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece, specifically Example 6, 'I Said To Love', Bar 50. The score is written for a grand piano and consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a treble clef staff with a 'Quasi cadenza' marking and an 'accel.' marking. Below it are two grand staff staves (treble and bass clefs). The bass clef staff has a 'ff' dynamic marking and the instruction 'deliberato, pesante'. There are also 'simile' markings and a '3' (triple) marking. The second system continues the piece with similar markings and a '8' marking. The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and a key signature of one flat.

#### 5.2.4 Pedalling

Nothing has been said, up to now, about one of the most significant aspects of the piano's timbre, namely the use of the pedal or pedals. The reason is simple: there are only four indications in Finzi's own hand for the use of pedal. These are to be found in "Summer Schemes" (*con ped.* below bar 0<sup>4</sup>), "The Clock Of The Years" (*una corda*, bar 57 and *tre corde*, bar 60) and "Overlooking The River" (*con pedale* bar 1). With so few indications in the composer's hand all discussion of pedalling must be largely speculative and will therefore be restricted to what is absolutely necessary.

The indication of *con ped.* at the beginning of a song which opens a cycle may well indicate the composer's intention, meaning this indication to be repeated at the beginning of each song in the cycle. It virtually goes without saying, purely from pianistic common sense and instinct, that the pedal would be used extensively in most songs. The general lack of indication follows the older practice of leaving the application of the pedals to the performer and not prescribing their usage. It reflects a more congenial attitude on the part of the composer towards the integrity of the performer. Transferring the responsibility of pedalling not only places confidence in the performer's ability but also draws the performer into a careful study of the details of

articulation. There are more than enough hints in the form of slurs and Italian terms to establish the composer's intentions. A small number of examples are cited to established the composer's thinking pattern.

In the song "I Say I'll Seek Her", a long slur appears over bars 2<sup>3</sup>-6<sup>3</sup> with no indication in the chordal bass part. The implication is clearly that *legato*-pedalling should be used. The articulation in the piano part of the opening motif in "Budmouth Dears" (a *portamento* on the first note, slurred to the third note containing a *staccato*) indicates an activated pedal up to the *staccato* indication. In the section with a chordal texture which follows shortly (b. 5), each chord is separated by a rest which implies that, if the pedal is used, it must be applied rhythmically and only on the first half of each crotchet beat. A more puzzling indication is encountered in the aria-section of "The Too Short Time" (b. 21-9). The right hand material has slurs over eight or more semiquavers, the term *pp legato* appears between the two staves and the bass in octaves contains half-*staccatos* over groups of two notes but a semi-quaver rest appears under each slur. The indication could mean nothing more than that the rest signifies the hand to lift on the last semi-quaver portion of each beat while a half-pedal technique achieves the required *legato*.

Some songs have a general *legato*-statement at the very opening, possibly a substitute for *con ped.* (Her Temple, The Comet At Yell'ham, Proud Songsters and It Never Looks Like Summer Here). A number of songs also have a *sostenuto*-indication at the outset which, in relation to the general atmosphere and articulation indications, seems to be indicative of the use of pedal (The Comet At Yell'ham, Former Beauties, The Dance Continued, Waiting Both, Overlooking The River, Let Me Enjoy, At A Lunar Eclipse and At Middle-Field Gate In February).

### 5.2.5 Articulation

Because articulation on the piano influences the timbre of the instrument significantly, the broad principles of Finzi's use will be discussed briefly. The indications range from *molto legato* and *sostenuto* (as was discussed in the previous paragraph in relation to the use of the pedal) and various slur lengths, to half-*staccatos* (*staccatos* under a slur), non-*legato* (no indication, which is often misleading), *portamento*, *portamento* and *staccato* on the same pitch, *staccato* and *staccatissimo*.

*Legato* touch in all its different guises, is the most prevailing articulation feature. It is found in songs or sections of songs where the accompaniment supports the meaning and atmosphere suggested in the text especially where a uniform theme and a sustained atmosphere dominates (Ditty, Her Temple, The Comet At Yell'ham, Shortening Days, The Sigh, Former Beauties, The Dance Continued, Waiting Both, In A Churchyard, Proud Songsters, Overlooking The River, The Too Short Time, Epeisodia, Amabel, Let Me

Enjoy, In Years Defaced, The Market-Girl, I Look Into My Glass, It Never Looks Like Summer Here, At A Lunar Eclipse, Life Laughs Onward, I Need Not Go, At Middle-Field Gate In February, In Five-Score Summers and For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly).

Half-*staccato* indications are not used as extensively as *legato* indications. They are rather used to indicate specific timbre modifications in isolated places. In "I Say I'll Seek Her", the text of the second stanza suggests the arrival of dawn and has a chordal accompaniment with half-*staccato* indications (b.6<sup>3</sup>-10<sup>4</sup>). The song "Childhood Among The Ferns" contains a variety of articulation indications, one of which is the half-*staccato*. It occurs in the bass part on a three-note, *arpeggiated* motif (b. 12-4 and 18) and in the treble part on a *mordent* motif (b. 16-8). In this case the articulation is varied from the preceding *staccatos* and the following *legato* to achieve a different timbre. The *staccatos* in this particular context accompany light rain while the *legato* accompanies stronger rain. The half-*staccato*, then denotes the state of rain in-between, slowly gaining strength. A set of half-*staccatos* occurs in "The Self-Unseeing" on groups of chords, in the bass part which are displaced over an octave (b. 35-41). The adjacent text is, "Childlike I danced in a dream" and these semi-detached chords, marked *pp sempre delicato* and *il basso molto leggero*, give an impression of a childlike improvised dance. In "Overlooking The River", half-*staccatos* occur in the bass part in a number of isolated bars (b. 5-6<sup>2</sup>, 11-13 and 15). In this more sustained atmosphere the indication means that the hand should detach while the pedal sustains an effect which slightly emphasizes the bass timbre. Half-*staccato* indications are used in the song, "In The Mind's Eye", on crotchet chords in two different places (b. 2 and 27-8) and on a single quaver run in the bass part of bar 26. All these indications occur in the lower register and detaching them clarifies the sound-identity of each chord while with a purely *legato* indication the chords may easily become murky. The interesting half-*staccato* indication which occurs in the second half of "The Too Short Time" was discussed in the paragraph on pedalling. Half-*staccato* indications appear briefly in the bass part of the final bars (b. 33-4) of "I Need Not Go". The *arpeggiated* bass is mildly emphasized.

The *portamento* indication occurs in every song either on single pitches or on short melodic fragments. The purpose does not seem to be only that of articulation (how much the note should be detached or attached) but also that the note or notes should be mildly emphasized (Her Temple (b. 13), The Sigh (b. 33-5), Transformations (b. 2, 5 ect.), So I Have Fared (b. 46), In A Churchyard (b. 55-7) Childhood Among The Ferns (b. 1-2 etc.), Channel Firing (b. 1-3, 24-6, 50-3, 76-80), Let Me Enjoy (b. 17), In Five-Score Summers (b. 5-6, 19, 22-5)). Instances requiring a more detached touch without being *staccato* proper, are those containing a combination of the *portamento* and *staccato* (I Say I'll Seek Her (b. 27-8), A Young Man's Exhortation (b. 21-3), Shortening Days (b. 12-7), Rollicum-Rorum (b. 21-2) and The Clock Of The Years (b. 8, 40)).

*Staccato* and *staccatissimo* indications are also reserved for specific occasions and are, virtually without fail, directly related to textual meaning or atmosphere. Only prominent examples are quoted. In "Budmouth Dears", excitement and marching qualities are accompanied by the extensive use of *staccatos*. Towards the end of the song "Transformations" (b. 42-4), *staccatissimo* indications portray the surge of energy which has transformed the deceased souls into the natural vegetation in the churchyard. In the song "When I Set Out For Lyonnaise", the *staccatos* are written out and many quavers are followed by quaver rests, i.e. crotchet *staccatos*. Finzi occasionally used this notation doubly to ensure a *staccato* result. "Rollicum-Rorum" with its marching, satirical connotations is amply supplied with *staccatos*.

An interesting and very different use of the *staccato* is displayed in "To Lizbie Brown". In this sensitive setting of private loss and regret *staccato* indications reinforce the persona's attempted detachment from his own feelings. The persona does not quite succeed in convincing the reader or himself, for that matter, that he is at peace about the relationship which never materialized. The meticulous indications of articulation in the postlude (b. 63-6) bear testimony to this. Five different indications ranging from *staccato* to *portamento* are used and the final, single dominant note is suspended in mid air, incomplete and listless.

In "Childhood Among The Ferns", *staccatos* signify light rain. A large section containing *staccatissimo* indications occurs in "Before And After Summer" (b. 15-25) These serve to give an impression of winter miseries (winds, sleet, snow) and are particularly effective when placed in the middle to higher range of the piano.

Example 7 Before And After Summer Bars 13 - 24

The musical score for Example 7, "Before And After Summer" (bars 13-24), is presented in a three-staff format. The top staff is the vocal line, written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The lyrics are: "down the street Win-try scourgings seem but play, .....". The middle and bottom staves represent the piano accompaniment. The right hand of the piano part features a melodic line with various articulations, including staccato and staccatissimo markings, particularly in the higher register. The left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes.

Five foreboding pitches in the extremely low register occur in the postlude of the song "The Self-Unseeing". Each of these is furnished with a *staccatissimo* indication in a *pp* context. This unusual setting is related to the final line of the poem, "Yet we were looking away" which, seen in the larger context, casts a shadow over Hardy's memory of some of his childhood experiences. A combination of *staccatos* and *staccatissimos* are used in "Channel Firing" (b. 60-3) at the moment when the skeletons shake the heads – the composer has the black-humoured rattling of bones in mind. There are extensive *staccato* indications in the *agitato* sections (b. 5-10 and 65-78) of "He Abjures Love". The *staccatos* enhance the spirited rejection of Romantic Love.

It is the combination of the piano register, its resultant sonority, the use of the pedal and the different articulation indications which collectively establish the particular timbre or tone colour of each song. It has been shown that the composer, in the main, carefully considers the meaning and atmosphere of the poem in his choice of timbre for any particular song.

### 5.3 String Quartet Timbre

A string quartet accompanies the earliest Hardy songs in the cycle *By Footpath and Stile* (Op. 2), published in 1925. The editor of the 1981 edition, Howard Ferguson, says the following concerning this cycle in the *Editor's Note*:

The six [songs] that comprise **By Footpath and Stile** are his earliest;....[and were] designed to be performed complete, as a cycle. The work was written during 1921-22, first heard in public in 1923 and published in 1925. Some years later Finzi withdrew

it and for long remained uncertain whether it should be to some extent revised - possibly excluding some songs and including other new ones. During the 1940s he finally decided to do so, but as it turned out only completed the revision of Nos. 1 & 3. The changes he made consist mainly of additions to the dynamic markings, which were always sparse in his early works. The music itself, apart from minor details and half a dozen bars in each song, remains virtually unchanged. (1981:iii)

Because the six songs in the cycle only have roman numerals as titles, the songs will be referred to by their poetic titles which are given below:

- I      Paying Calls
- II     Where The Picnic Was
- III    The Oxen
- IV    The Master And The Leaves
- V     Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard
- VI    Exeunt Omnes

### 5.3.1 Register

The string quartet as an instrument has one disadvantage, namely the relatively high lower limit. The 'cello lowest pitch, the second C below middle C, hardly allows for the exploration of lower sonorities. The restrictions in the upper register are less inhibiting and an entire range of roughly five octaves between the four instruments, is available to the composer. One of the timbre advantages is that a large range of pitches can be realized on any of the instruments, each with its own particular tone colour.

A middle to lower register is employed in "Paying Calls" with the exception of two short sections in which the first violin explores the high register (b. 41-5 and 103-6). The darker sonority aptly accompanies the context in which the poet visits the largely neglected graves of some of his deceased friends.

Example 8      Paying Calls      Bars 1 - 6

Moderato,  $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 69$

VOICE

VIOLIN 1

VIOLIN 2

VIOLA

CELLO

The two higher sections are not directly text related. The sombre mood is largely set by the prelude of 53 bars, slowly emerging from the lower timbres of the 'cello, viola and second violin.

A middle-range sonority is used in the restrained setting of "The Oxen". No ledger line above the treble clef staves of the first or second violin is employed and the 'cello reaches its lowest C sharp only once (b. 22). This deliberate restraint effectively sets not only the quiet Christmas-Eve mood but also the poet's limited, groping sense of hope.

"Where the Picnic Was" also employs a middle register, enhancing the dolorous atmosphere. There are two exceptions, namely at the climax of the song (b. 20-4) when the narrator finds the picnic spot and towards the end of the song (b. 36-8) when he becomes aware of his intense isolation which is signified by a solo violin passage in the extremely high register. The prelude to and postlude of the song use similar material which consists of a single-line melody passed on from one instrument to the next. The viola with its warm, consoling sonority opens and closes the setting.

"The Master and the Leaves" explores a middle to high sonority without exploiting extremes. This setting of a pastoral text with its *presto giocoso* indication, is at home in the largely bright setting. There is one important exception, namely the setting of a 'night-time' atmosphere (b. 63-77) where a ricochet motif in the three lower strings is juxtaposed with a long descending melody in the first violin over the initial seven bars before it joins in the ricochet motif.

The most substantial setting in the cycle, "Voices from Things Growing in a Churchyard" returns to the theme of the deceased in their graves, now transmuted into the natural vegetation in the churchyard (as in the poems "Transformations" and "While Drawing in a Churchyard"). This humorous, light-hearted portrayal of a number of local county characters, their 'natural' redemption and life after death, is understandably set in varying register. At the climax of the song (b. 102) a wide range is employed: after a brief but intense chord, spread over five octaves only the lowest C on the 'cello remains as a pedal note. The slow ascent of the melodic material from bars 1 to 8 anticipates the process of transformation from death into vegetable growth. The melodic ascent is portrayed later (b. 39-46) when the 'cello part rises through an octave from the lowest C sharp as an indication of the 'struggle' by a certain "Bachelor Bowring" to break out of his shingled oak coffin.

Example 9    Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard    Bars 39 - 45

*string.*

shin - gled oak my bones were pent; Hence more than a hun - dred years I

Still later, Audeley Gray's ascent into the ivy-green, is set by thirteen rising triads in the upper string parts.

The final song in the cycle, "Exeunt Omnes", leans heavily on the first three songs in terms of borrowing musical material. A higher register dominates and gradually ascends towards the end of the song. The first violin part uses harmonics in the last thirteen bars and this creates an immense sense of distance. The text deals with the poet's increasing feeling of isolation as everything and everybody around him departs. The final line of the poem, "Soon one more goes thither", is effectively contemplated in the postlude. More boisterous sonorities earlier in the poem (b. 7-17) accompany the references to a country fair.

### 5.3.2 Bowing and articulation

The small number of bowing indications suggest that the responsibility for these are largely left to the performer. The use of the mute is specified at the end of "Paying Calls" (b. 103 *con sord.*) and "Where The Picnic Was" (b. 54, 56, 58) and at the opening of "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard" (b. 3, 18). The mute has the effect of distancing the sound and is effective in these circumstances which reveal a sense of isolation. The indication of the ricochet technique in "Where The Picnic Was", has already been discussed.

Articulation is indicated fairly completely, shorter *legato* bowing being the most prominent. A small number of *pizzicato* indications occur. The 'cello part in "Paying Calls" has two such indications (b. 65, 106) neither of which has a significant impact on the timbre. Further *pizzicato* and *staccato* indications are found in "The Master And The Leaves" where they do make an impression on the timbre. These indications enhance the atmosphere of frivolity as leaves 'show off' to attract the Master's attention (b. 15, 144-7, 150-3 - *pizz.*) *Staccatos* are present more or less to the same effect in, "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard". The lightness of "Fanny Hurd's" dancing is suggested by the use of *staccatos* in various parts. The other characters' comical 'struggle' to achieve their re-incarnation is often accompanied by *staccato* indications.

These details concerning Finzi's manipulation of timbre as a compositional element show his sensitivity towards it even if some of the settings are a somewhat crude and lacking experience in these early works. The seeds for the later, more expressive handling of a wide variety of moods have already been sown here.

#### 5.4 Small Orchestra

The third movement of the *Requiem da Camera* (Op. 4) is the only setting of a Hardy poem with an orchestral accompaniment. Although the setting of the poem, 'In The Time Of 'The Breaking Of The Nations'', was complete in piano MS, Finzi never finished the orchestration. The score was, however, completed in the 1980s by Philip Thomas. In the programme note accompanying the 1991 recording he explains:

In 1982 I came across a draft full score of the later Hardy setting among Finzi's manuscripts in the Bodleian Library. It is complete to the end of the first stanza, but thereafter increasingly fragmentary. This hastily-written sketch is 12 pages long, and is in his autograph full score of the Requiem...With Joy Finzi's encouragement I completed the orchestration, retaining everything that could be salvaged from the sketch and 'composing' only a single note. (1991:4)

Since this orchestration is not Finzi's entirely, it seems unfair to the composer and unscientific in terms of the study to include any serious discussion on the use of orchestral timbre.

#### 5.5 Summary

Vocal timbres are carefully matched with the content and atmosphere of the poems. The male orientation of Hardy's poems is reflected in the setting of these for baritone and tenor exclusively. The instrument of the voice is treated with the utmost understanding and sympathy. The piano timbre as accompaniment dominates (86%) in the Hardy settings. Although the piano sonorities employed do justice to individual settings, the piano as an instrument is not fully explored. There is a tendency, with exception, to understate and restrain the role of the piano. Finzi's handling of the string quartet is only potentially impressive (Banfield 1985:289), the settings being obviously youthful, somewhat direct and awkward at times. The single full orchestral setting which Finzi did not complete, can merely be mentioned; a critical examination in this context, would not be appropriate.

## CHAPTER 6

### Duration

The term duration in this context, is a collective name for all aspects of the duration of the pitch and how these are organised. The composer's organisation of the beat or metre, the application of rhythmic material and choice of tempo or speed will be examined to discover how these elements enhance the meaning and atmosphere of the text.

#### 6.1 Metre

##### 6.1.1 Metric characteristics of the poems

The metre of Hardy's poetry is often asymmetrical. There are sections of metric consistency but a variation is generally introduced at some point. The visual form is already a good barometer. The lines are of uneven length and the many indentations are symptoms of the metric asymmetry. A few examples are cited.

The formal construction of the poem "I Said To Love" follows the format of the first stanza. Notice the irregularities in line two. There is also a trochaic variation at the opening of the fifth line in the otherwise iambic context.

#### I Said To Love

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | I said to Love,                      |
| 2 | 'It is not now as in the old days    |
| 3 | When men adored thee and thy ways    |
| 4 | All else above;                      |
| 5 | Named thee Boy, the Bright, the One  |
| 6 | Who spread a heaven beneath the sun' |
| 7 | I said to Love.                      |

The poem, "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly" has a largely dactylic metre. The only deviation is in the opening of line five. The considerable variation in the line lengths results in the occasional extension of a musical bar in the setting in spite of the metric evenness.

### For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly

1                   For Life I had never cared greatly  
2                    As worth a man's while;  
3                   Peradventures unsought,  
4                   Peradventures that finish in nought  
5           Has kept me from youth and through manhood till lately  
6                   Unwon by its style

The first two lines of "Two Lips" can run on in dactylic metre but lines three, five and seven are distinctly iambic. The emotional content of "so long!" in line six requires spondaic treatment. There is an apparent difference in length between the extended lines three and seven but, when the feet are compared, they are the same: five feet each. The difference lies in the subtle variation of a dactylic foot in the middle of line seven.

### Two Lips

1                   I kissed them in fancy as I came  
2                    Away in the morning glow:  
3           I kissed them through the glass of her picture-frame:  
4                    She did not know.  
  
5                   I kissed her in love, in troth, in laughter,  
6                    When she knew all; so long!  
7           That I should kiss her in a shroud hereafter  
8                    She did not know.

Two stanzas from the metrically complex poem, "The Clock of the Years", are quoted. Direct speech by different characters has a strong presence in Hardy's poems and carries with it irregularities of natural speech. Notice again the complications with line length and the spondaic example in line 13.

### THE CLOCK OF THE YEARS

1           'A spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up.'  
  
2                                   And the Spirit said,  
3           'I can make the clock of the years go backward,  
4           But am loth to stop it where you will.'  
5                                   And I cried, 'Agreed  
6                                   To that. Proceed:  
7                                   It's better than dead!'  
  
8                                   He answered, 'Peace;'  
9           And called her up - as last before me;  
10          Then younger, younger she freshed, to the year  
11                                   I first had known  
12                                   Her woman-grown,  
13          And I cried, 'Cease! -

Even the light-hearted "Sergeant's Song" with its strict marching metre in the verse, is suddenly out of step in the delightful nonsensical refrain. This serves as an example of Hardy's control of traditional verse metre but also shows his rustic sense of humour.

### The Sergeant's Song

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | When Lawyers strive to heal a breach,  |
| 2 | And Parsons practise what they preach; |
| 3 | Then Boney he'll come pouncing down!   |
| 4 | And march his men on London town!      |
| 5 | Rollicum-rorum, tol-lol-lorum,         |
| 6 | Rollicum-rorum, tol-lol-lay!           |

Mark Robert Carlisle in his unpublished study, *Gerald Finzi: A Performance Analysis*, has the following to say regarding Hardy's metric construction:

The structure of many of Hardy's poems is more asymmetrical than one might suppose, given his architectural training, but his verses possess a balance and craftsmanship that can be attributed to his early profession. His poems frequently look unbalanced and disorganized on the page, but when studied produce rhyme schemes and metrical patterns that are quite often rigidly followed and exceptionally well executed. (1991:23)

#### 6.1.2 Metric characteristics of the songs

Finzi's musical reaction to these metric characteristics, seen on a macro-scale, displays similar tendencies. There are ten songs in common time or simple triple metre in which no metric deviation occurs. These conventional metres are set in a conventional way. There are five songs which have no time signature for either the entire song (Ditty, The Comet At Yell'ham and At A Lunar Eclipse) or part of the song (Shortening Days and The Clock Of The Years). Between these two extremes are the majority of songs with minor or extensive deviation from the originally stated time-signature. There are also internal metric changes where the time-signature does not change but, by displacing metric accents and beaming across the barline, a brief metric change is achieved (Waiting Both, Proud Songsters, Channel Firing, In The Mind's Eye and In Years Defaced).

Since there are so many songs containing metric changes, it is important briefly to discuss the reasons for these deviations. Most of the metric deviations occur as a result of careful declamation of the text. Finzi is unperturbed by metric irregularities in the text; he simply places the appropriate word on the strong beat and alters the time-signature. One example of this procedure is to be found in bars 12 to 20 in the song "So I have

Fared" where in the space of nine bars the time-signature changes five times to ensure the appropriate syllable on the strong beat.

Example 10 So I Have Fared Bars 12 - 23

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The time signature changes five times across the nine bars shown.

- System 1 (Bars 12-14):** Time signatures: 3/4, 5/4, 4/4. Lyrics: "At my start by He-li-con Love-lore lit-tle wist I, World - ly less; but"
- System 2 (Bars 15-17):** Time signatures: 2/4, 4/4, 3/4. Lyrics: "foot-ed on; Why?... Me sus - ce - pi - sti!"
- System 3 (Bars 18-20):** Time signatures: 3/4, 4/4, 4/4. Lyrics: "When I failed at fer-vid rhymes, 'Shall,' I said, 'per - sist I?'"

In other instances metric deviations occur to change radically the atmosphere of the song. Such is the case in "Childhood Among The Ferns": the prelude to the song is in common time which gives way to a more pastoral simple triple metre at the moment when light rain is suggested. When the stronger rain starts coming down, the time-signature changes to compound duple. The opening common time returns when the sun gloriously appears.

Another example of a metric deviation with a more lasting impact is found in "The Master And The Leaves". The unusual time signature of a single minim beat per bar is associated with the leaves' merry boasting to their

Master about their achievements through the season. In the final section of the song when the leaves are convinced that the Master is paying no attention, the time-signature (and tempo) changes. The common time in a slower tempo also provides the backdrop to the Master's eventual answer: he has only seemed to be indifferent; in fact he has really followed their progress carefully.

The final example of metric deviation relating to meaning or atmosphere comes from "Rollicum-Rorum". Four bars (b. 10, 33, 56 and 79), one in each stanza, depart from the quick, march metre (simple duple) to a single bar of triple metre. The text setting would comfortably have survived no metric change but the composer builds in a touch of metric humour by suggesting that occasionally a soldier is out of step. Such attention to detail is at the heart of Finzi's effectiveness as a composer of songs.

A word needs to be said about the three songs which contain no time-signature. The song "Ditty" has barlines but the time-signature change is not specified. Finzi provides the barlines merely to assist the pianist to perceive the strong beats in the way he (Finzi) did. There are forty one bars in common time (by far the most prominent) eleven in simple triple metre, eight bars with five crotchet beats and three bars with six crotchet beats. There are thirty-one metric changes most of which occur to ensure that stressed syllables are placed on strong beats. The other two examples, "The Comet At Yell'ham" (1926-9) and "At A Lunar Eclipse" (1929) are thematically linked as has been pointed out in the previous chapter. Finzi strengthens this thematic unity by creating a similar atmosphere in the songs, partly as a result of the lack of a rigid time signature. In both cases, the crotchet beat becomes the unit of movement and the performer's attention is focused on the absolutely even metric movement. The listener experiences being ill at ease at first but later realizes that he or she is simply 'lost' in the immensity of the universe because of the absence of accentuated beats - which is the effect that the composer intended.

A relatively small number of internal metric changes occur. A subtle shifting of the main beat is used in "Waiting Both" (b. 4, 9, 13-5, 27-9), also thematically linked to the two previous examples whereby a sense of being unsettled is achieved. The uncertainty that man and star experience, with regard to their place and purpose in the universe, is enhanced by the composer's tampering with the metric flow.

A brief, internal metric deviation occurs in "Proud Songsters" (b. 5-7) which the composer indicates with square brackets above the applicable material. A three-crotchet motif suggests four bars of simple triple metre in the otherwise common time context. The call-and-response procedure between the treble and bass parts anticipates the calling of two of the nightingales mentioned in the first stanza of the poem: "And as it gets

dark loud nightingales \ In bushes \ Pipe, as they can when April wears," (l. 3-5, see example 40).

The largely iambic metre of the poem, "Channel Firing" is matched in the setting with a consistent common time which is never deviated from externally. There are a number of brief internal deviations as a result of the use of syncopation. The relentless forward drive in the song is never seriously impeded. The first shift of metre occurs to anticipate and emphasize the opening of God's speech and accompanies the words "Till God called," (b. 16<sup>4</sup>-18<sup>3</sup>). The metre is also slightly shifted at the end of God's speech where, in the piano interlude, the words "for you are men, \ And rest eternal sorely need" are contemplated (b. 47-50).

In the poem, "In the Mind's Eye", a strong sense of longing results from the beloved's unapproachableness and the narrator's reliance on memory to simulate her presence. The effectiveness of the setting lies in Finzi's capturing the ebb and flow of mental activity in the piano accompaniment. The metric deviation which is indicated with square brackets by the composer, occurs prior to the start of the emotionally more controlled final section of the song (b. 39-41). The shift from  $4_4$  to  $3_2$  is part of the process of retarding the activity so that a slower rhythmic material may accompany the more peaceful statement of the final stanza of the poem.

The final example of an internal metric shift occurs in the song, "In the Years Defaced". The poem called, "A Spot" is a dramatic impression of the unfailing love of two people whose memory lingers in a particular spot. The metric shift coincides with the text, "And gust and gale \ As everywhere", and the unsettling effect is closely linked to the mood of the text.

Example 11 In Years Defaced Bars 20 - 29

The musical score for Example 11, "In Years Defaced" (bars 20-29), consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a treble clef and contains the lyrics: "sun and shadows wheel, Season and season sereward steal: Foul days and fair". The piano accompaniment is in a bass clef. The score includes a triplet of eighth notes in the vocal line, a piano (*p*) dynamic marking, a forte (*f*) dynamic marking, and a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking. The piano part features a long melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand.

Here, too, pre-vail, And gust and gale As eve-ry-where.....

But lone-ly shepherd souls Who

Finzi's manipulation of musical metre as a variable element at his disposal shows a text-sensitive approach. Metric changes are numerous and functional with regard to natural speech rhythm and the setting of atmosphere.

## 6.2 Rhythm

### 6.2.1 Acceptable rhythmic setting

Although Finzi's rhythmic settings of the Hardy texts generally follow natural speech rhythms, there are many examples of extremely meticulous rhythmic settings and only four rhythmically questionable settings. A few examples of the careful settings are shown. The dramatic song "The Clock of the Years" opens with a *recitativo*-section, during which the natural speech rhythms are very carefully approximated in musical notation (system three):

And I cried, 'Agreed To that. Proceed: It's better than dead!'

The song, "Shortening Days" opens without a time-signature and as a result the textual rhythm is followed closely. The more important words have relatively longer values and are placed at a higher pitch to accentuate them (system one):



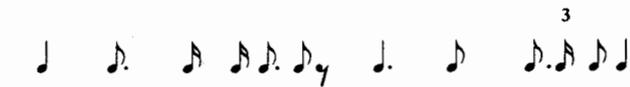
The first fire since the summer is lit, and is smoking into the room:

Towards the end of the song "Childhood Among The Ferns" the subject of the poem, Hardy as a boy, utters the following words which Finzi sets against two static chords in the accompaniment (b. 57-9):



I said: 'I could live on here thus till death;'

The last example comes from the vocal opening of "The Too Short Time". Again the bars are partially measured with dotted barlines and the indication, *quasi recitativo* appears above the text (system 3):



Nine leaves a minute Swim down shakily;

### 6.2.2 Questionable rhythmic setting

The four rhythmic settings which are questionable are as follows. In "So I Have Fared" (b. 31), the word "sadly" is slightly distorted by the placing of a dotted minim on the first syllable and a crotchet on the second. This weakness is also present in a number of other places where vocal phrase-ends are prolonged for dramatic effect, often distorting the natural length of a syllable for the sake of musical expression. The preposition "of" is set with an unnecessarily long rhythmic value in the context (a dotted crotchet), though on the second and weaker beat of the bar in the song, "In A Churchyard" (b. 21). In "Channel Firing", the awkward word "gunnery" (b. 20) should have been set in the same manner as "skeleton" (b. 61) and not by prolonging the value of the first syllable. The most serious rhythmic flaw occurs in the poem, "I Look Into My Glass", on another word uncomfortable to set, "equanimity". Finzi places the first syllable on the strongest beat in a triple metre bar and prolongs it slightly. The natural stress of the word is on the third syllable and the first two should be treated as an upbeat. These rhythmic weaknesses, however, represent a minute percentage of the volume of Finzi's settings of the fifty-one Hardy poems.

### 6.2.3 Rhythmic activity

In considering Finzi's general use of rhythmic activity, a number of tendencies in relation to the meaning or atmosphere of a specific poem or section of a poem, are apparent. Active rhythmic material has positive or dramatic connotations while stagnant rhythm has connotations of emotional neutrality, melancholy, isolation

or indifference. A mixture of rhythmic material in the same vicinity connotes turmoil or impulsiveness. A number of examples are quoted below.

In the poem, "Where The Picnic Was", the persona tells of the solitary visit he makes to a picnic spot visited by him the previous summer with his lover and two friends. Since then his loved one has died and his friends now live in the city. The sparse accompaniment of the song with its slow crotchet movement, conjures up images of his isolation and nostalgia. Two bars prior to the entry of the voice, metric and rhythmic material change to a still slower minim movement. This mildly dissonant rhythmic, melodic and harmonic *ostinato* intensifies his experience and gives an impression of the persona's inability to come to terms with his loss. The same material in an inverted order, closes the song.

In his setting of the second stanza of the poem, "Proud Songsters", Finzi allows the fairly active rhythmic material of the first stanza (see example 38) to subside into a mixture of quaver and crotchet movement. This decrease in activity becomes significant when the meaning of the text is considered. Stanza one is a purely pastoral exaltation of the activity of birds at dusk. In stanza two the poet expresses a feeling of listlessness when he perceives the birds' oblivion of their own fleeting existence. The listlessness is accompanied by slower moving rhythmic material.

The poem, "While Drawing In A Churchyard" is one of Hardy's poems which deals with the deceased's perception of human existence. A yew-tree relates these insights to the poet while he is drawing in a country churchyard. The first four quatrains are accompanied by widely varying rhythmic material supporting the somewhat macabre scene. When the poet, in the last stanza, comments on what he has heard, the metre, speed and rhythmic material suddenly changes (b. 55). The new, consistent semi-quaver material supports the poet's quiet contemplation and acceptance of the insights which he has just gained.

"Let Me Enjoy" contains another striking example of how rhythmic activity is used to change the atmosphere of a song. The first stanza makes a statement on man's enjoyment of nature in spite of his sorry plight and is accompanied by quaver movement. The second and third stanzas reveal to us the writer's own cause for distress, being scorned in love. The emotional turmoil beneath these stanzas results in a semi-quaver

dominated accompaniment (b. 10-24) which only subsides at the start of the final stanza in which the poet gladly rejects "Paradise".

The final example of the effect of changing rhythmic activity, is to be found at the opening of "In Five-Score Summers". The poem entitled, "1867" projects what the world and man's situation would be like in a hundred years' time. Finzi sets this weighty contemplation in meditative minims. Suddenly the poet's projected vision of 1967 bursts forth with a chromatic semi-quaver activity for the next four bars and Finzi gives us his anticipated impression of the mid-twentieth century.

Example 12 In Five-Score Summers Bars 1 - 7

The musical score for "In Five-Score Summers" (bars 1-7) is presented in two systems. The first system, marked "Andante comodo" and "a piacere", features a voice line with the lyrics "In five-score sum-mers!" and a piano accompaniment starting at a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system, marked "animato (l'istesso tempo)", shows a dramatic increase in rhythmic activity, with the piano part featuring a chromatic semi-quaver pattern and dynamics ranging from mezzo-piano (*mp*) to mezzo-forte (*mf*). The lyrics for the second system are "All neweyes, Newminds, new modes, newfools, new wise; New woes toweep, new joys..... to".

#### 6.2.4 Rhythmic motifs

Finzi's use of rhythmic motifs has two basic purposes. They have a structural function to create unity within a single song and a semantic function to enhance the meaning or atmosphere of the text. The most frequently used motif consists of four quavers and in general has a structural function (Paying Calls, Waiting Both, Ditty, A Young Man's Exhortation, Her Temple, Before And After Summer, Rollicum-Rorum, In The Mind's Eye, Amabel, In Years Defaced and I Look Into My Glass). There are other motifs of similarly restricted semantic value but of paramount structural purpose. In "Transformations", the four semi-quavers fulfil this structurally

binding function and, in "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly", three quavers and two dotted crotchets as two complementing motifs establish structural unity. In "The Oxen", a longer motif consisting of a dotted crotchet, three quavers and four semi-quavers serves much the same function by its recurrence.

The rhythmic motifs with a semantic function exhibit a number of tendencies. The first motif comprising four crotchets, repeats itself, creating a sense of time passing. Concerning this motif, Stephen Banfield (in *Sensibility and English Song*) says the following:

The most notable passage in the instrumental introduction [of "Only a Man Harrowing Clods"] ....also appears in the prelude to the *Requiem* [*Requiem da Camera* (1924)], and....[is]... Finzi's characteristic march of time....a throbbing bass. (1985:290)

This "throbbing bass" occurs in "So I Have Fared", with the text: "So I have fared for many suns;" as a steady crotchet movement in the bass (b. 27-32). The crotchet bass motif also occurs in "The Sigh" when the passing of time is suggested in the words, "And she loved me staunchly, truly, till she died;" (b. 24-7). In "Before and After Summer", the autumn section has a strong time orientation with the reference to the moving shadows (b. 44-8). The half-*staccato* crotchets in the middle section of "The Too Short Time" accompany the words, "Sunlight goes on shining" (b. 21-9). A steady crotchet movement is one of the strongest rhythmic features of the song, "At A Lunar Eclipse", and the slow movement of the earth's shadow across the moon is suggested.

A second tendency, closely related, occurs a number of times. Here even rhythmic movement occurs (not always crotchets) to indicate evenly measured activity. The two soldier's songs, "Budmouth Dears" and "Rollicum-Rorum", belong to this category in which the steady march of soldiers is captured. The *staccato* crotchets (notated as four quavers each followed by a rest) in "When I Set Out for Lyonnaise" occur extensively in the song and suggest the onward motion of the poet on his way to Lyonnaise. A similar sense of incessant movement is suggested in the middle stanza of the poem "Epeisodia". The extensive use of a *staccato* crotchet bass-motif sets the words, "Where the footstep falls \ With a pit-pat wearisome" (b. 24-40).

Example 13 Epeisodia Bars 24 - 40

*pp*  
Hemmed by ci - ty walls That out - shut the sun - light,..

*pp*  
*sostenuto*  
*pp sempre*  
*stacc.*

..... In a fog - gy dun light, Where the foot - step falls With a

*sempre staccato*

pit - pat wea - ri - some In its ca - den - cy..... On the flag - stones drea - ri - some.....

..... There pressed wel.....

In "Shortening Days", the second stanza conjures up an image of the approaching cider-maker. The "pondering pace" with which he advances is supported by an even flow of quavers each furnished with a *portamento* accent and with the indication *pesante* (b. 7-10). The *legato*, even crotchet movement in the song, "At Middle-Field Gate In February", supports the words "And as evenly spaced as if measured" (b. 6). These words refer to raindrops which are evenly spaced on the crossbar of the gate. In more general terms, the rhythmic motif suggests the monotony and bleakness of the winter landscape.

The last tendency concerns a motif with a dance-like character. There are two prominent examples: the first is in "The Dance Continued" where the delicately sombre atmosphere of the first section is interrupted by lilting, compound duple metre and the typical three quaver and dotted quaver, semi-quaver and quaver motifs which immediately change the atmosphere. The text which prompts these changes is, "And lightly dance \ Some triple-timed romance" (b. 31-45). The second example comes from "Former Beauties". Virtually the same procedure is followed, the text being, "Do you remember those gay tunes we trod" (b. 14-27).

There are a number of isolated rhythmic, and usually melodic motifs, which demand attention. The names "Lizbie Brown" (two quavers and a minim) and "Amabel" (two semi-quavers and a crotchet) have each a rhythmic motif which accompanies them almost creating a short refrain. The motif is derived from natural speech rhythm in each case. Two other refrain-like motifs from the text are to be found in "I Said To Love" (crotchet, double-dotted crotchet, semi-quaver and a minim) and "The Market-Girl" (from the words, "stood on the causy curb" (quaver, two semi-quavers, two quavers and a crotchet)). There are other motifs not derived directly from the text but rather indirectly from the general meaning of the context. "The Too Short Time" contains one such motif at the very opening where rambling, irregular rhythmic groupings suggest the falling of successive leaves (see example 5). The gun-fire motif, consisting of two demi-semi-quavers and a crotchet, in "Channel Firing" is another example (See example 22). In "The Phantom", there is a motif associated with the "ghost-girl rider", consisting of a dotted quaver, semi-quaver and quaver twice over, which occurs at regular intervals to torment the persona who is unable to rid his mind of the image (see example 15 b. 107-108). The spine-chilling, seven demi-semi-quavers at the beginning and end of "The Clock Of The Years" are singular in their dramatic effect.

Example 14 The Clock Of The Years Bars 1 - 3

*"A spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up."*

**Recit: Drammatico**  $\downarrow = c. 68$

VOICE *f* And the Spi-rit said, "I can make the clock of the years go

PIANO

It is clear from this discussion that Finzi was acutely aware of the important structural and semantic value of rhythmic motifs, general rhythmic movement and of keeping as close as possible to natural speech rhythm in the setting of a text.

### 6.3 Speed

#### 6.3.1 Tempo indications

Finzi is meticulous with his tempo indications. There is not one of the fifty-one Hardy songs that is not furnished with a metronome marking. These range from *Lento*  $\downarrow = c. 42$  in "The Comet At Yell'ham" and *Adagio*  $\downarrow = c. 42$  in "At Middle-Field Gate In February" to the *Allegro*  $\downarrow = c. 160$  of "Summer Schemes" and *Allegro Robusto*  $\downarrow = c. 144$  in "Rollicum Rorum". A large number of the songs also contain a permanent change-of-tempo marking, as required by changing meaning or atmosphere in the text. There is also plurality of non-permanent tempo inflections (*rit.*, *rall.*, *ten.*, *accel.* and *a tempo*) which serve either a semantic or a structural purpose.

#### 6.3.2 Tempo indications and meaning

Finzi uses very slow tempos (*lento* or *adagio*, c. 50 crotchet beats per minute or less) in contexts associated with uncertainty (Waiting Both) or misery (I Look Into My Glass) or in describing inactive scenes (At

Middle-Field Gate In February). Slow tempos (*andante sostenuto*, c. 54-66 crotchet beats per minute) are used where the text suggests melancholy (In A Churchyard, The Self-Unseeing, In Years Defaced and It Never Looks Like Summer Here) or quietude (Her Temple, Overlooking The River and At A Lunar Eclipse). Moderate tempos (*moderato* or *andante comodo*, c. 69-80 crotchet beats per minute) often set ambivalence in a text (The Sigh, Let Me Enjoy, Life Laughs Onward). The moderately fast tempos (*allegro moderato*, *amimato* or *andantino*, c. 80-100 crotchet beats per minute) are the most prominent and set a variety of moods but are often associated with suppressed excitement (Transformations, In The Mind's Eye, Two Lips and The Market-Girl) or emotionally unsettled circumstances (Exeunt Omnes, To Lizbie Brown and Amabel). Quick tempos (*Presto* and *Allegro*, c. 126-160 crotchet beats per minute) are associated with elation, activity and emotional intensity (The Master And The Leaves, Budmouth Dears, Summer Schemes, When I Set Out For Lyonesse, Rollicum-Rorum and I Said To Love).

### 6.3.3 Tempo changes

In a number of songs, large-scale tempo changes are vital to the meaning and atmosphere of the text. In the early song, "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard" six country characters, who have died at various times introduce themselves as having transmuted into the natural vegetation in the churchyard. The first character Fanny Hurd, died as a girl and now dances in the daisies above her grave. The tempo indication is *Adagio* ♩ = c. 63. The same tempo indication is used for the third character Thomas Voss, who has grown into the berries of a yew-tree and the fifth character, Eve Greensleeves, a lady of accommodating nature who now, as a "with-wind climb", is kissed only by glow worms and bees. The final stanza in which the poet celebrates the new and happier form of life adopted by the deceased, also returns to *Tempo I*. Two of the remaining characters Bachelor Bowring, a miser, and Squire Audeley Grey, a life-weary person, are both redeemed by transformation into the natural vegetation and the joyous release that they experience is set in a lively *Allegro*. The central figure of the song Lady Gertrude, was proud and vain in her lifetime but now renders service as the leaves of a laurel. The indication *più mosso* appears at the beginning of the stanza. It seems that the two characters who have benefited most from the transformation are associated with the livelier tempo whereby they now gain prominence and are able to take their rightful place as 'citizens of the churchyard'.

"Childhood Among The Ferns" also contains a number of crucial tempo changes to suit the atmosphere and circumstances. The short prelude suggests a sunny episode at an indulgent *Andante sostenuto* ♩ = c.56. This

recurs with the reappearance of the sun towards the end of the song (b. 54). Following the prelude, a section suggesting light rain is marked *Andante con moto* ♩ = c. 96 (*più mosso*) (b. 6). When the rain gains strength the beat unit changes but the basic tempo remains the same, *a tempo* ♩ = ♩ of preceding (♩ = c. 64).

In "Channel Firing", the macabre gravity of the initial scene is set in a slow tempo, *Solenne* ♩ = c. 58. As God's speech becomes more impassioned, the tempo increases, *molto più mosso (quasi doppio movimento)* (b. 24). After an almost sadistic laugh and with reference to the Final Judgement, the tempo broadens and returns to the original: *Allargando molto...al...Tempo I* (b. 41-43).

The self-assured rejection of sentimental, romantic love in "He Abjures Love" has all the ingredients for dramatic setting. The manipulation of the basic tempo is one of the key elements in creating the drama. The song opens with *Animato* ♩ = c. 96, in an already agitated frame of mind. As the emotional torments of youthful Love are listed, the tempo increases: *accel.....poco più mosso* ♩ = c. 112 (b. 18-21). Then, in momentary repose, during which the poet recalls an innocent youth spent without subjection to romantic love, the tempo decreases: *Ritard.....all.....Meno mosso* ♩ = c. 76 (b. 41-6) only gradually to increase again at the mention of Love's cunning trickery: *Ravvivando...poco...a.. poco... all...Tempo I* (b. 55-62). As the rejection of romantic love becomes less emotional and more rational, the tempo decreases again: *Ritardando....all Meno mosso* ♩ = c. 76 (b. 86-9) and further decreases as the realization dawns that there is little left in life, once love, even romantic love, has been rejected: *Ancor meno mosso* ♩ = c. 60 (b. 111).

The final example of a song which contains structural tempo changes is Finzi's last Hardy song, "I Said To Love". It is on much the same theme as the previous song except that no sobering realization dawns at the end of it. Instead the poet rejects romantic love, irrespective of the consequences even if this means the destruction of mankind. The opening tempo, as is often the case in highly emotionally charged circumstances, is *Allegro* ♩ = c. 126. As the attack on love intensifies, the tempo increases, *Poco più mosso* ♩ = c. 144 (b. 17). At the climax of the song, "Depart then, Love!" (b. 49), the indication is *Liberamente*, an intense, violent freedom which is immediately followed by the terror-stricken *Quasi Cadenza. Tempo del principio* (♩ = c. 126) (b. 51) connotes the opening atmosphere of agitated anger and remains until the end of the song.

A number of observations need to be made regarding non-permanent tempo inflections. The semantic or meaning-related inflection occurs extensively and only a few examples will be discussed. The first of these is to be found in "I Say I'll Seek Her". Towards the end of the song it becomes clear to the beloved that the

lover is not going to arrive and, in anticipation of the words, "And I am waiting, waiting", a *tenuto*....| (b. 27-8) indication occurs on a short, dissonant piano interlude. The *tenuto* anticipates the waiting. In "The Sigh", the refrain-like occurrence of the words, "But she sighed" (and variations on these), are in all except one case accompanied by a *rit....a tempo* indication. The physical slowness of a sigh is thereby simulated while the end of the phrase is also indicated. In "Transformations", one of the vegetatively transformed characters is a certain pious lady who "prayed...for repose". At these very words, a *poco rit....pochiss: meno mosso* indication is used (b. 22-3) which directly supports the meaning of the text. The mildly agitated answer of the poet to the star, "For all I know, Wait," in "Waiting Both", is accompanied by an *Accel....Affretando* indication (b. 15-6), enhancing his emotional uncertainty. In the song "Life Laughs Onward", the poet who visits an old house recalls the death of a friend who lived there. At the dramatic words "The sod had riven two breasts asunder", an *accel.* indication is used to support the emotional intensity which inevitably accompanies the death of a loved one. In "The Phantom", the mocking image of the "ghost-girl rider" defiantly "draws rein" at the end of the song to torment the poor protagonist once more. To enhance the slower motion of the rider, a *Rall.* (b. 103) indication anticipates and is immediately followed by *Largamente* (b. 105). When the rider resumes the former pace, the words *A tempo* indicates the start of the postlude which contains the last statement of the rider motif.

Example 15 The Phantom b. 99 - 108

The musical score for "The Phantom" (b. 99-108) is presented in two systems. The first system features a vocal line with the lyrics "spot,..... And.... as...when first eyed....." and a piano accompaniment. Above the vocal line, the tempo marking "Rall." is indicated. The second system features a vocal line with the lyrics "...Draws rein..... and sings to the swing of the tide....." and a piano accompaniment. Above the vocal line, the tempo markings "Largamente" and "A tempo" are indicated. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings such as "ff" and "sfz".

The structural tempo inflections occur as phrase-end indications or simply as anticipations of the end of the song. In the song "To Lizbie Brown", such phrase-end indications are used meticulously. The same procedure is followed in the song "Overlooking The River" where all except two phrase-ends are furnished with *Poco ritard....A tempo* indications. Only three of the fifty-one Hardy songs contain no *ritardando* at the end, namely "Budmouth Dears", "Rollicum-Rorum" and "At A Lunar Eclipse". These songs, in fact, contain no tempo inflection throughout. It is in character for the two storming marches to keep the tempo consistent to achieve the marching effect and the absolute evenness with which a lunar eclipse takes place fully justifies the even-flowing tempo in this song. Finally, knowing the instincts of performers all too well, Finzi specifies *senza rit.* and *senza rall.* in two songs: "Ditty" (b. 24-5) where he does not want a phrase-end retarded and in "When I Set Out For Lyonesse" (b. 21 and 61) where he does not want the brisk forward movement to be impeded.

Finzi manipulates tempo and tempo change to the advantage of his settings. Large-scale tempo changes and non-permanent tempo inflections are functional: they are either directly related to the meaning and atmosphere of the text or fulfil a structural function as indications of phrase-ends.

#### 6.4 Summary

Finzi's deep interest in language and literature is evident from the extreme care he takes with the metric and rhythmic aspects of his settings. The natural speech rhythm and metre are followed as closely as possible and any forced manipulation for the sake of musical expression is seldom found. Apart from serving the language, Finzi's use of rhythmic material has important structural and semantic function in his settings. The structural function is mainly that of creating cohesion of the rhythmic material within a song while the semantic function is that of directly supporting and enhancing the textual meaning by using appropriate rhythmic motifs. The initial setting of the tempo and the subsequent variation thereof is done with care and is in most cases directly related to the meaning of the text, the atmosphere of the poem and the structure of the music.

## CHAPTER 7

### Pitch organization

The term Pitch organization, in this context, refers to a broad application which endeavours to include all aspects of musical pitch whether it be a single pitch or a combination of pitches. The horizontal and vertical aspects of pitch as a phenomenon are explored. This phenomenon is subdivided into three aspects: the purely horizontal or melodic construction, the gravitation of pitches towards a specific centre or tonal construction and the vertical manifestation of pitches in conjunction with horizontal parts or harmonic and contrapuntal construction.

#### 7.1 Melody

The main melodic material in any song-related context is usually that in the vocal part. This is not to deny the presence of melodic material in the accompaniment but simply confirms the fact that song is generated from a vocal response to the text. Where melodic material plays a significant role in the accompaniment, it will be discussed in the section dealing with harmony and counterpoint. The present discussion will focus on the vocal melodic material.

##### 7.1.1 Interval analysis of the vocal part

In the interval analysis of the vocal line, the distance between consecutive pitches was recorded in a table for fifty of the fifty-one songs. Where phrases were divided by more than one bar of rest, the interval from the end of the phrase to the next was disregarded. The table listed the intervals from a unison to an octave or to whatever other intervals a specific song contained, differentiating between ascending and descending intervals. Having the sum total of vocal intervals of the songs available, means that any fraction of any interval distance or group of distances is expressible as a percentage. This analytical scrutiny was deemed necessary to arrive at a statistically viable statement of Finzi's use of intervals. Small intervals were considered to be the unison or repeated pitches, the seconds and thirds (ascending or descending). Larger intervals were considered to be from a fourth to an octave and compound intervals (ascending or descending). With this division in mind, each song was classified in terms of its voice-friendliness. The table below summarizes the findings:

|   |    |       |
|---|----|-------|
| Songs containing 90-100% smaller intervals: | 5  | (10%) |
| Songs containing 80-89% smaller intervals:  | 28 | (55%) |
| Songs containing 70-79% smaller intervals:  | 17 | (33%) |
| Songs containing 60-69% smaller intervals:  | 1  | (2%)  |

It is clear that Finzi's setting of the Hardy texts shows an extreme sympathy and sensitivity to the voice as an instrument. It also shows a conservative approach to vocal melodic writing and that the composer is thoroughly steeped in the vocal traditions of the late Victorian song-writing era. Of the five songs with an extremely high incidence of small intervals, three are from the early cycle, *By Footpath and Stile* (1921-2) and should not be regarded as belonging to Finzi's mature work (paraphrasing Finzi's son Christopher's words from a personal interview: Church Farm, 15 July 1994). The other two, "Budmouth Dears" and "The Sigh", also belong to the early period, ca. 1926-9, published in the cycle *A Young Man's Exhortation* (1933). Both these songs, though very different in character and atmosphere, are clearly reflections of the English Folk-song genre. Melodically the most venturesome song is "When I Set Out For Lyonesse" in which 'only' 67% smaller intervals are used. The most prominent larger interval is the ascending fourth (14) and descending (9) fourth. The strong sense of suppressed excitement is carried by the directional thrust of the perfect fourth. Other close-contending songs in the 'melodically venturesome' category are as follows (the bracketed number gives their percentage of smaller intervals): "Former Beauties" (72), "Waiting Both" (72), "In A Churchyard" (71), "The Too Short Time" (73), "In Years Defaced" (72).

### 7.1.2 Challenging vocal passages

In spite of a large number of songs being vocally approachable, challenging passages do occur. A few examples are offered in which the interval's relation to meaning or emotion is also briefly shown. In the song "I Say I'll Seek Her", two consecutive ascending perfect fourth intervals occur on the word "interposes" (b. 2) and require careful pitching at a fast tempo. These intervals act as a melodic emphasis and reinforce the meaning of the word. In "A Young Man's Exhortation", the use of a descending octave, preceded by an ascending major third and followed by an ascending perfect fifth on the words, "That girdled us" (b. 8) places melodic emphasis on these words. A second descending octave preceded by a major second and followed by a perfect fourth on the words "could ever be" (b. 10), reinforces the emotional content of the larger context. Two ascending major sevenths, the first preceded by a descending perfect fifth, occur in close proximity to one another in "The Phantom" (b. 46-7 and 48-9). In both cases, the seventh emphasizes the meaning of the words "More" and "sweet" and underlines their emotional content. There is also a melodic chromatic passage

in the song aptly accompanying the words, "And though, toil-tired, he withers daily" (b. 88-91). The chromaticism enhances the pathos of the protagonist who is mentally and emotionally tormented by the image of the "ghost-girl rider". One of the most poignant examples of matching specific text to specifically applicable intervals is apparent in "Before And After Summer". In the first stanza of the poem, the searing end of winter and the anticipation of spring is described. The poet's reference to winds that leap (b. 12) is set with an ascending octave. The idea of the gusting winds is further enhanced by another ascending and descending octave on the words "but play, \ And these" (b. 15-7). Another particularly taxing passage occurs with the words "Forediscerned in winter last" (b. 59-60). This line occurs at the end of the second stanza of the poem where the poet expresses his discontent at the swift arrival of yet another winter. This emotional discontent is set with an ascending and descending minor seventh, an ascending minor sixth, a descending octave and a rising major third.

In the macabre and dramatic setting of "Channel Firing", a number of challenging interval settings occur. The words, "window squares" (b. 6) are set with a descending perfect fifth and an ascending minor seventh, serving as melodic emphasis. The ascending minor tenth between the words "sea" and "Just" (b. 20-21) also places strong emphasis on the latter and then, aptly, descends rapidly through the same minor tenth to the word "below". The main climax occurs towards the end of the song on the word, "avenge" and is set with an ascending octave to do justice to the emotional content of that word. The opening vocal line of "He Abjures Love" is also quite challenging. The words, "At last I put off love", (b. 2-5) are set with an ascending minor sixth and the four consecutive, descending intervals: a minor third, two perfect fourths and a major second. This rapid descent through a minor tenth occurs within five crotchet beats and carries with it a strong sense of angry rejection. A second taxing passage occurs with the words "my house-fellows, \ And fool" (b. 28-30) and consists of an ascending minor sixth, two descending fifths, of which the first is diminished and an ascending minor sixth. The significance of this expressive use of intervals is clear from the larger context: the persona is describing how he was first affected by the discomforts of unrequited romantic infatuation. Discontent and scorn are the emotions that these intervals carry.

Intervals of more than an octave occur in two other songs. In "Rollicum-Rorum", an ascending minor ninth occurs four times (once in each stanza b. 20, 43, 66, 93) as a pure expression of excitement in the nonsensical refrain. In the song "In Years Defaced" (to the poem "A Spot"), an ascending minor tenth occurs from "steal" to "Foul" (b. 21-2) placing strong emphasis - along with the accent - on the latter word. There is also an example of melodic chromaticism in the song, "In Five-Score Summers" (b. 5-7 see example 12). The seven pitch, descending chromatic scale coincides with the words, "All new eyes, New minds, new modes" and gives an impression of turmoil in the twentieth century. The accompaniment and following vocal line is Finzi's most chromatic passage in the Hardy songs.

### 7.1.3 Vocal singing style

#### Parlando style

Broadly, there are three types of vocal setting in the Hardy songs. There are a large number of songs with a strong *recitativo* or *parlando* inclination, a substantial number exhibit a strong folk-song orientation and others could be termed as having *aria* characteristics. *Recitativo* inclinations occur in the last stanza of "A Young Man's Exhortation" (b. 26) which has a narrow range except for the one descending octave leap on the words "within us". The quietude of the vocal line and unmetred rhythmic naturalness is a good match for the resigned acceptance suggested in the text. A more *arioso* tendency exists in the opening section (systems 1-6) of "Shortening Days". The melodic intervals are more varied but the text is still closely followed, complimenting the acute description of the advent of autumn. The song, "So I Have Fared", has the tempo and character indication, *Allegro, Quasi Recit. stromentato* ♩ = *c. 108* and the composer provides the following footnote (quoted from *Earth and Air and Rain* (1936)):

This recitative should be sung with the flexibility and freedom of ordinary speech, and the crotchet should approximate to the reciting note of Anglican chant (1936:28)

The churchliness of the melodic line and rhythmic characteristics is suited to the general gist of the poem "After Reading Psalms XXXIX, XL, etc." in which Hardy incorporates penetrating self-examination with Latin quotations from these Psalms, elegantly rhyming these with the English text. "The Clock Of The Years" never seriously exhibits any characteristic other than *recitativo* declamation. The song opens with a chilling spoken line: "A spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up" and then the indication *Recit: Drammatico* ♩ = *c. 66* appears. The direct speech by both poet and spirit justifies the use of the *recitativo* singing style. The first stanza and last line of the poem, "The Self-Unseeing" also have strong *recitativo* overtones. This sinister setting of a typical Hardian exploration of the processes of memory uses a low tessitura, extremely small melodic range and many repeated pitches to create an impression of the prowling around in the past. The text is, "Here is the ancient floor, \ Footworn and hollowed and thin... \ Where the dead feet walked in". The first section of the song (coinciding with the first stanza of the poem), "The Too Short Time", has the indication with vocal line, *Quasi recitativo*. Here too, the vocal-melodic material tends towards *arioso* with a wider interval range and fewer repeated notes. The text is again one of those penetrating descriptions, this time of falling leaves signifying the end of autumn. The dolorous atmosphere is enhanced by the *arioso* vocal style. "The Market-Girl" also has the indication, *Quasi recitativo* with much

the same effect although the atmosphere is more detached. The *arioso* style for the use of vocal intervals also dominates in "At Middle-Field Gate In February": a small melodic range, a 37% use of repeated intervals and carefully placed larger intervals. In a review of the Grotrian Hall performance of *A Young Man's Exhortation* (5 December 1933), printed in the *Musical Times LXXV*, Marion Scott has the following to say concerning Finzi's use of the *recitativo* vocal style:

It is curious to see how the musician has reacted to the slightly non-lyric touch that checks the singing quality in so many of Hardy's poems. Mr Finzi reflects this non-lyricism by vocal lines and verbal rhythms that deviate from melody toward prosody. The process is very subtle, and at times, successful; but one wonders whether in some instances he would have not been justified in overriding Hardy with pure singing tunes. (1934:74)

### Folk-song style

The second group of songs are those with a substantial folk-song orientation. Of this folk-song influence, Stephen Banfield says the following in *Sensibility and English Song*:

When melodic folksong influence is apparent in Finzi, it is of that sort of folksong that is closest to the homeliness of the hymn tune. This quality of homeliness,.... may suggest a peculiarly English diffidence well suited to Hardy's customary tone of indifference or equanimity in the face of nature's indifference to man, and has the effect of making Finzi's vocal lines quite unforced, natural and often emotionally low-pitched and conversational;....They seem to have an inevitable rightness about them; they clinch unforgettably those striking lines of Hardy's where he uses words and phrases which are perfectly familiar to us, but which we do not expect to find in the context of lyrical poetry; the effect is that we are surprised and therefore remember them. (1985:281-2)

These songs include "Paying Calls", "The Oxen", "Budmouth Dears", "The Sigh", "Transformations", "The Dance Continued", "Lizbie Brown", "Rollicum-Rorum", "Overlooking The River", "Epeisodia", "Amabel", "Two Lips" and "I Need Not Go". The tunefulness of these songs make them immediately accessible to the listener as though he has known them for ever.

Example 16 The Sigh Bars 1 - 5

Moderato  $\text{♩} \approx c. 72$

Voice

Piano

Lit-tle head against my shoul -

- der, Shy at first, then some what bold - er, And up eyed;

Aria style

The songs that explore a larger scope of melodic expression and have *aria* characteristics, are "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard", "I Say I'll Seek Her Side", "Summer Schemes", "Proud Songsters", "Childhood Among The Ferns", "Channel Firing", "He Abjures Love" and "I Said To Love". The use of larger, more dramatic intervals in these songs was discussed in an earlier paragraph. These songs tend to be longer and more intense and often contain two or more changes of atmosphere.

The vocal-melodic characteristics of "Childhood Among The Ferns" will be discussed as a final example. Of the larger intervals, the fourth is the most prominent (ten ascending, six descending) and enhances the excitement of the young boy playing among the ferns when it starts raining. The descending perfect fifth occurs nine times emphasizing and reinforcing the meaning and emotional content in the text. There is a single descending perfect eleventh, which not only changes the tessitura but also reinforces the meaning of the text: the child gazing up and down as the larger drops start to fall through his "spray-roofed house". In the final, more pensive section of the song (from b. 57), a *parlando* singing style with its emphasis on repeated notes and rhythmic text-relatedness, captures the child's depression: "Why should I have to grow to man's estate?". The child is of course, Thomas Hardy, this being one of the directly autobiographical poems.

#### 7.1.4 Vocal climax

Concerning the placing of the vocal climax, Finzi generally follows one of two practices with a small number of songs falling between these. The first is the traditional 'good' practice of having a single highest pitch as vocal climax. The second practice shows a climactic 'ceiling' where the highest pitch is reached several times in the course of a song. This group includes the strophic or varied strophic songs where the climax is repeated in each verse. There are also two cases where an anti-climax or lowest pitch seems to be more important than the highest. In three of the early songs (and one later one), the vocal climax is not entirely successful. In "The Oxen", the climax occurs early in the song on the word "sat" in the context: "An elder said as we sat in a flock". There are several other placements in this song that could have been explored with better success (for example: "Now", "Come" and "Hoping"). In "The Master And The Leaves", the single climax is in an acceptable vicinity, "We are fully woven" but on the weak syllable of the word "fully", a weakness which could easily have been removed. In the next song of the cycle, *By Footpath And Stile*, "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard", the same type of weakness occurs. In the word "satins", referring to the lavish apparel of the central character, Lady Gertrude, the weaker syllable again takes the climactic note. The final example comes from the later song, "Childhood Among The Ferns". Coinciding with the sun bursting forth (b. 54), the highest pitch in the song occurs on the weaker part of beat four, on the word "and". Again, there are obvious ways in which this could be redeemed. In all fairness, one may argue that the anti-climactic final B flat, on the word "perambulate", is possibly intended to be the emotional climax of the song and not the highest pitch in bar 54.

Of the single climax songs, three examples are given below. The first is from "The Comet At Yell'ham" which has an early, happily-placed climax on the word "Height" (system 3<sup>1</sup>). The second, from "I Say I'll Seek Her", occurs towards the middle of the song and there is a strong emotional undercurrent on the word "Detains" in the context: "What indecision \ Detains you, Love, from me?" The third is an intense, brief climax at the end of the song, "Transformations", on the word "made", from the line: "That made them what they were!". The text here refers to the creative energy which brought the deceased into being in the first place.

Although there are obvious limitations in the use of a climactic ceiling as is evident in the early songs (Paying Calls and Where The Picnic Was), there are other cases where the deliberate restraint of not ascending higher than a specific pitch expresses emotional inhibition or indifference. The latter is present in "I Need Not Go" and the former in "Lizbie Brown" and "Amabel". A last example in this category is "Overlooking The River" which has a sustained, pastoral atmosphere which is enhanced by avoiding a single climax.

Finally, two anti-climaxes need to be mentioned. First, in "He Abjures Love", the lowest vocal pitch (b. 118-9) occurs on the words "certain, \ But" which reinforces the irony in the poem. No sooner has certainty been reached about the good sense of rejecting love than a more pertinent question presents itself and emerges from the anti-climax on "But....after love what comes?". The second subtle anti-climax occurs in the song, "At Middle-Field Gate In February", on the final word "underground", referring to a bevy of beauties now dead.

### 7.1.5 Melodic motifs

The importance of establishing motifs for the sake of structural unity has already been stressed in the section on rhythmic motifs in Chapter 5. It was there pointed out that rhythmic motifs are often melodic motifs as well. In the present discussion, a number of prominent vocal melodic motifs and their variations will be presented. The three examples quoted here are similar in that they have a refrain-like function and, as such, have a strong unifying purpose in their respective songs. In the poem "Amabel", the name of the narrator's former beloved recurs at the end of each of the eight stanzas. In Finzi's setting he treats the odd-numbered stanzas alike except for prolonging the final pitch of the seventh stanza. The last line of each of the even-numbered stanzas is treated in a similar way: rhythm and repeated pitches are retained but at different pitch levels and the up-beat pitch to each recurrence of the name is also different. The approaching interval, in each case different, is a descending interval except before the final stanza. It subtly changes the emotional value on each occasion.

#### Example 17 Amabel Motif analysis

A similar but more intense effect is achieved in the setting of "To Lizbie Brown" where the name occurs in the first and last line of each of the nine stanzas. Occurring eighteen times, even finer techniques of variation are needed. Again the odd-numbered stanzas are treated alike except for minor rhythmic deviations and a shrinking of the interval at the end of stanza five. Of the rest, stanzas two and six are similar with rhythmic

variation and stanzas four and eight are similar with a transposition of the first occurrence. The descending tendency in the second setting of the name in the odd-numbered stanzas results in a sense of resigned despondency while the ascending trend at the end of the even-numbered stanzas suggests an entreating, though rhetorical questioning.

Example 18 To Lizbie Brown Motif analysis

STANZAS 1, 7

*First line* *Last line*

Dear Lizbie Brown Dear Lizbie Brown

STANZA 3

*First line* *Last line*

And Lizbie Brown Sweet Lizbie Brown

STANZA 5

*First line* *Last line*

Ay Lizbie Brown Love Lizbie Brown

STANZA 8

*First line* *Last line*

But Lizbie Brown Lost Lizbie Brown

STANZA 2

*First line* *Last line*

Still Lizbie Brown O Lizbie Brown

STANZA 4

*First line* *Last line*

When Lizbie Brown My Lizbie Brown

STANZA 6

*First line* *Last line*

Still Lizbie Brown O Lizbie Brown

STANZA 9

*First line* *Last line*

And Lizbie Brown Sweet Lizbie Brown

The four stanzas of "I Said To Love" each contain two statements of the title as the first and the last line of each stanza. The climax of the poem, "Depart then, Love" is a variation and is treated as such musically. In the second occurrence (in each stanza) of the words, "I said to Love Him", larger intervals are used to intensify the emotional effect. The melodic feature that connects all these refrain-like occurrences is the ascending directional thrust which is largely responsible for the defiant atmosphere in the poem. Finzi unequivocally affirms the practice of attaching stronger emotional expression to larger melodic intervals in this, his final, Hardy song.

Example 19 I Said To Love Motif analysis

STANZA 1

first line

I said to Love

last line

I said to Love

STANZA 2

first line

I said to Him

last line

I said to Him

STANZA 3

first line

I said to Love

last line

I said to Love

STZA 4

first line

De - part then, Love!

last line

I said to Love

Finally, the most extensively used larger interval is the perfect fifth. It occurs as an entity in virtually every song and extensively in a large number of songs (Ditty, Her Temple, The Dance Continued, The Comet At Yell'ham, The Too Short Time, He Abjures Love, Former Beauties, In Years Defaced, I Need Not Go, Episodia, Channel Firing). The use of the interval shows three tendencies: it either purely emphasizes, or directly enhances meaning or reinforces the emotional content of the text. In some cases two, or all three functions are present simultaneously.

## 7.2 Tonality

The presence, absence and mixtures of tonal and modal centres are discussed in this section. The relationship between these aspects and the textual meaning and atmosphere are explored to show the composer's thought processes.

### 7.2.1 Tonal dominance

The first important observation is that the overwhelming majority of the songs are tonal. This means that a tonal centre or centres are clearly discernible. There are a number of songs which have one brief modulation or no modulation at all. "Ditty" is in G major throughout with a single chromatic alteration on the word "smart". This "smart" is the pang experienced by the poet at the thought that he might never have met his beloved. In this case, Hardy is directly addressing his first wife, Emma. The sharp dissonance of a major-minor chord on B within the otherwise diatonic context, makes an effective setting. The unflinching major key supports the almost matter-of-fact tone of this love poem. It also suggests an emotional neutrality and an acceptance of the reality that passion does not last while memories do. Another example of a song remaining in a single key throughout is "Let me Enjoy". The tonal stability of G flat major is interrupted only in the final cadence where the lowered chord vi<sup>7</sup> suggests the uneasiness of the preceding text referring to Paradise: "Though it contain no place for me". Here the evenness of tonality supports the calmly-argued rejection of the the "all-enacting Might's" (God's) Will for the poet's life. The tonal stability also symbolizes nature's consistency which comforts the poet. Other examples of songs with a single modulation or chromatic alteration are "I Need Not Go", "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly", "Lizbie Brown" and "The Sigh". In "The Sigh", the final stanza of the poem opens with the following lines: "It was in our May, remember; \ And though now I near November". The key change from G major to E major effectively captures the time-shift from youth to advanced age and from wallowing in memories of the past to the reality of the present.

At the other end of the scale there are a number of songs which display a tonal vagueness for specific purposes. The two principal examples are "In Five-Score Summers" and "At Middle-Field Gate In February". Although the former starts and ends in g minor, bars five to twelve contain a deliberate tonal vagueness which portrays the composer's impression of twentieth century "chaos" suggested by Hardy's text: "All new eyes, \ New minds, new modes, new fools, new wise; \ New woes to weep new joys to prize" (see example 12). The latter seems to start in g sharp minor but only begins to secure the key in bar 23. The foggy winter scene which Hardy describes in detail, is set with an equally foggy tonality which only stabilizes when the pleasanter past is recalled.

Example 20 At Middle-Field Gate In February Bars 1 - 5

Adagio [ $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 42$ ]

VOICE

The bars are thick with drops that

PIANO

*molto sostenuto*

*p*

*3*

*3*

*simile*

*3*

show As they gather themselves from the fog..... Like sil-ver buttons ranged in a

The extremes of Finzi's practice are: tonal vagueness and absolute tonal clarity. Between these extremes, two more prominent tendencies emerge: the use of modal influence and extended tonality through the use of extensive modulation during which the keys reasonably clear.

### 7.2.2 Modal influence

The only truly modal settings are the very early ones, "The Oxen" and "The Master And The Leaves" (both of these are in the Dorian mode). Two of the other early songs, "Paying Calls" and "Exeunt Omnes", have strong modal tendencies although they are not entirely modal. This early, somewhat obtrusive, use of modal characteristics can possibly be ascribed to Finzi's study of seventeenth century counterpoint with Sir Edward Bairstow from 1918 to 1922. Although modal influences lurk in the shadows of many Hardy songs, the handling becomes increasingly more text-related and subtle in later works. In "The Oxen", with its Christmas theme and religious references, the use of a modal framework seems more appropriate than in the other songs mentioned. The modal tendencies in other songs are the result of Finzi's use of the natural minor key (as in Budmouth Dears, The Dance Continued, When I Set Out For Lyonesse, Channel Firing, Epeisodia and Two Lips) and the frequent use of chords ii, iii or III and vi or VI and his avoidance of a prominent position for the dominant chord as in, for example, "Overlooking The River" and "Amabel". One example of the

effectiveness of modal tendencies is to be found in "Budmouth Dears". The poem is set in the time of the Napoleonic Wars, making use of an archaic tonal system entirely appropriate. A second effective example is the modal ending of "Overlooking The River". Here the pleasantness of the pastoral setting of the poem is over shadowed by the poet's retrospective sense of having neglected his beloved. This 'incomplete' Dorian ending captures the mood of the text: "O never I turned, but let, alack, \ These less things hold my gaze!".

### 7.2.3 Extended tonality

Extended tonality can be defined as a procedure in which a discernible tonal centre continuously shifts without necessarily following standard modulatory principles. This procedure is noticeable in a number of songs. A prime example is "The Clock Of The Years" which opens in d minor and ends in a minor, having in the interim touched on a minor, e minor, f sharp minor and c sharp minor. These changes of key closely follow the dramatic development of the poem. The second stanza, "He answered, 'Peace'", begins in a peaceful a minor which changes to a more dramatic e minor as the tension rises towards the climax "It is enough".

Example 21 The Clock Of The Years Bars 9 - 16

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for the first part of the excerpt. The vocal line begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes the lyrics: "He answered, 'Peace;'" And called her up - as last be-fore me; Then". The piano accompaniment is marked *p sostenuto e legato*. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "youn-ger, youn-ger she grew, to the year I first had known Her woman-grown, And I cried,". The piano accompaniment features a *Poco allargando* marking and *cresc.* markings in both the upper and lower staves.

"Ceasel\_ Thus far is good\_ It is e - nough\_ let her stay thus

As the ghostly figure shrinks a tragic f sharp minor establishes itself and is replaced by a more melancholic c sharp minor when the poet complains that his memory of the loved one is now permanently destroyed. When the opening recitative recurs, the opening key (d minor) is recalled but the song ends with 'gothic' plagal cadence in a minor: a lowered IV<sup>7</sup> (D flat-F-A flat-C) in first inversion to i<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub> and i, placed in the extremely low register of the piano. The transitional key-changes enhance the drama.

A second example of extended tonality is found in the song "The Self-Unseeing". The prelude opens in a dubious e flat minor, compared by Stephen Banfield (1985:295) to the opening of "Der Doppelgänger" (Franz Schubert) but reaches f minor at the entrance of the voice. The sinister text, "Here was the former door \ Where the dead feet walked in", is accompanied in a minor which lightens to C major at the mention of the smiling figure, the poet's mother. The fiddler takes over in a still brighter G major, reverts to C major on the word "glowed" with a chromatic lowered auxiliary, G sharp, providing the glimmer and "gleam". The complex final line, "Yet we were looking away", possibly carrying regret about not appreciating the blessings of childhood, sinks into a gloomy a minor. The keys, again, carry the underlying emotional content of the text as it develops.

Example 22 The Self-Unseeing Bars 1 - 6, 17 - 23 and 34 - 37

Andante  $\text{♩} = c 54$

PIANO *pp*

Un poco più mosso;  
grazioso  $\text{♩} = c. 66$

dead feet walked in. She sat here in her

Child - like, I danced in a dream;.....

*p dolce*

*pp sempre delicato*

*il basso molto leggiero*

Other songs in which extended tonality is used as a compositional procedure are "In a Churchyard", "Channel Firing", "In The Mind's Eye" and "The Too Short Time".

The majority of songs follow similar modulatory procedures but with fewer and more firmly established keys. A fine example is "At A Lunar Eclipse", which opens in D major, modulates to G major, e minor, b minor and back to D major – all of which are related keys as they follow one another. The effect of employing such a close-knit 'family' of keys is that it captures, along with the unmetred rhythmic movement and quiet dynamics, the "imperturbable serenity" of the earth's shadow moving across the moon. There are many other examples including "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard", "I Say I'll Seek Her", "So I Have Fared", "Transformations", "Summer Schemes".

#### 7.2.4 Pan-diatonicism, bitonality, atonality and chromaticism

There are four additional aspects of tonality which require comment. They are not in general use in the songs and cannot be considered as regular features of Finzi's style. They rather show Finzi's awareness of twentieth

century tonal techniques. The first is the use of pan-diatonicism. The first section (18 bars) and last (19 bars) of "Where The Picnic Was" clearly show the use of this technique. This almost aimless tonal meandering is effective in suggesting the meaning of the text: the poet is wandering up a hill in reminiscent mood, re-living last summer's climb to a picnic site with some friends. There is one more hint of pan-diatonicism, except for the chromaticism in bar five, in the opening bars of "The Too Short Time". The technique here supports the underlying idea of leaves descending from the tree to the ground.

The second feature which is not used extensively but does occur, is bi-tonality. In the prelude to and postlude of "The Comet At Yell'ham" the right hand material uses C major while the left hand material is in G flat major. The result is a strange and eerie sound palette which effectively supports the idea of peering into outer space, following the progress of a comet (see example 4). Other examples of bi-tonality occur in the form of momentary chords and will be discussed in the next section.

There is a single section in Finzi's last Hardy song, "I Said To Love" which could be called atonal or at least highly chromatic, namely the *Quasi cadenza* (b. 50) which follows the angry dismissal of romantic love. It is interesting to note that, in spite of the rage and severity of the passage, it starts and ends on C, the dominant of F major from which it comes and f minor to which it goes (see example 6).

Finally, the aspect of tonal chromaticism needs some attention. Not one of the songs can be said to be entirely chromatic but chromaticism is a more regular feature than the other aspects mentioned in this section. The boldest chromaticisms occur in, "At Middle-Field Gate In February" (see example 20), "In Five-Score Summers", (see example 12) "Channel Firing" and "I Said To Love". The purpose of chromaticism in Finzi's music remains constant: it heightens dissonance to express anguish, anger or other strong emotions. Specific examples of chromaticism will be discussed in the next section.

Finzi uses tonality to express emotional states and the changes thereof. He translates Hardy's word-pictures into musical scenes. His use of tonality is less conventional than might at first appear. The extensive use of extended tonality places his music well within one of the important practices of the early twentieth century. Modal influences are strong and somewhat overbearing in earlier works.

### 7.3 Harmony

In a largely tonal framework the composer has to devise means by which dissonance can be achieved. There are a number of methods. Triad extension to the seventh, ninth and eleventh becomes a common practice,

diatonic non-harmonic tones, especially on the beat (or accented), are used extensively, pedalpoints are employed over which clashing harmonies are moved and there are chords (few in number) which contain added tones and notes which are chromatically altered. Other harmonic aspects, not specifically related to dissonance, include the composer's practice of not raising the leading note in a minor context which means that chord v is minor and III and VII are major, and the extensive use of chords in inversion, cadence evasion and harmonic *ostinatos*.

### 7.3.1 Triad extension

Triad extension to the seventh is extremely common and examples can be found in every song. The tonally contained "Ditty" will serve as an example (b. 5<sup>1</sup>-I<sup>4</sup><sub>3</sub>, 6<sup>2</sup>-IV<sup>7</sup>, 9<sup>1</sup>-ii<sup>7</sup>, 19<sup>4</sup>-vi<sup>7</sup>, 23<sup>2</sup>-IV<sup>4</sup><sub>3</sub>, 33<sup>2</sup>-iii<sup>7</sup>, 51<sup>3</sup>-ii<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>, 58<sup>2</sup>-V<sup>7</sup>). Creating these mild dissonances is vital in a song which contains only a single, chromatically altered note. They have the function of generating forward movement rather than being specifically associated with the meaning of the text. Where the composer uses harmonic construction to emphasize or support a particular word or phrase, stronger dissonance is used. For example, to emphasize the word, "change", (b. 34<sup>2</sup>) chord IV<sup>11</sup> and the only chromatically altered pitch (D sharp against D on bar 42<sup>3</sup>) occurs with the word "smart" as discussed above. This pattern is followed in many other songs: seventh extensions are part of the general chordal vocabulary while further extension and chromatic alteration signify dramatic or expressive emphasis.

In the song "Before And After Summer", ninth extensions are common, not only as blatantly stated chords (b. 41<sup>3</sup>-V<sup>9</sup>) but also by implication (b. 10-IV<sup>9</sup>, 13<sup>3</sup>-V<sup>9</sup>, 21<sup>2-4</sup>-iv<sup>9</sup>-iii<sup>9</sup>-VI<sup>9</sup>, 22<sup>2-4</sup>-i<sup>9</sup>-v<sup>9</sup>-iii<sup>9</sup>, 30<sup>4</sup>-32<sup>3</sup> a string of ninth implications). The bulk of these dissonances are directly related to the mention of the sharp discomforts of an icy winter (see example 7). Chord ii<sup>9</sup>, a favourite of Finzi, occurs prominently in "Childhood Among The Ferns" (b. 1<sup>3</sup> and 54<sup>3</sup>). The 'abundance' of sound in this chord, here, aptly accompanies the idea of the sun bursting forth in full glory after the rain. The foreboding postlude-codetta in "The Self-Unseeing" derives its character from the dominant ninth placed in the extremely low register. Many more extensions to the ninth occur in which the ninth is often the result of a non-harmonic tone on the beat (Proud Songsters, Overlooking The River, Amabel, etc.)

Chord extensions to the eleventh are fewer but, where used, have dramatic or expressive effect. Chord VI<sup>11</sup> is used on the word "ghost" (b. 52<sup>3</sup>) in the song "In The Mind's Eye". In "Rollicum-Rorum" (b. 84<sup>2</sup>-87) a tonal cluster represents chord V<sup>11</sup> at the emotional climax prior to the start of the final refrain. In the song "The Clock Of The Years", a secondary V<sup>11</sup> occurs on the word "plained" towards the end of the song in the context: "'Better' I plained, 'She were dead as before'". The eleventh, here, supports the deep sense of sorrow

felt by the lover at the destruction of the idealized image of his beloved. One of the most striking examples of chord IV<sup>11</sup> occurs in "Amabel" with the climactic words "'Till the last Trump" (b. 35), the dissonance suggesting the irony. Chord extension is a vital aspect of Finzi's expressive language.

### 7.3.2 Non-harmonic tones

Non-harmonic tones are also employed to create dissonance and, as such, become a part of Finzi's common practice. On a number of occasions they take on an especially significant role as is the case in "Proud Songsters" where their almost incessant recurrence cannot be ignored. A portion of the analysis is given to serve as an example:

| Bar | Beat | Dissonant notes/Interval            | Non-chordal note                             | Voice/s   |
|-----|------|-------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| 1   | 1    | D-C# semitone                       | C# accented appoggiatura                     | Alto      |
|     | 2    | F#-G semitone                       | Chord notes iv <sup>11</sup> , A escape tone | Soprano   |
|     | 3    | F#-E wholetone                      | E accented passing note                      | Soprano 2 |
|     | 4    | B-A wholetone                       | A accented passing note                      | Alto      |
| 2   | 1    | F#-G min 9th (semitone)             | G suspension                                 | Alto      |
|     | 2    | E-F# maj 9th (wholetone)            | F# suspension                                | Alto      |
|     | 3    | E-D maj 9th (wholetone)             | E suspension                                 | Alto      |
|     | 4    | C#-D/B min/maj 9th (semi/wholetone) | D/B suspensions                              | Sop/Alt   |
| 8   | 3    | D-C#/A# maj 7th/Aug 5th             | C# acc app/ C# acc pn                        | Sop/Alt   |
|     | 4    | C#-G# Aug 5th                       | G# accented lower auxiliary note             | Tenor     |
| 9   | 1    | B-C# maj 9th (wholetone)            | C# accented passing note                     | Tenor     |
|     | 2    | E-F# maj 9th (wholetone)            | F# accented passing note                     | Alto      |
|     | 3    | -                                   | B accented upper auxiliary note              | Alto      |
|     | 4    | F#/A#-G maj 7th/aug 9th (cluster)   | G accented appoggiatura                      | bass      |
| 10  | 1    | F#-E wholetone                      | E accented passing note                      | alto      |
|     | 2    | F#-G maj 7th                        | F# suspension or pedal note                  | Soprano   |
|     | 3    | F#-E wholetone                      | E accented upper auxiliary note              | Alto      |
|     | 4    | E-D maj 7th                         | D accented upper auxiliary note              | Alto      |

| Bar | Beat | Dissonant notes/Interval | Non-chordal note                            | Voice/s |
|-----|------|--------------------------|---|---------|
| 11  | 1    | D-C# maj 7th             | C# accented upper auxiliary note            | Alto    |
|     | 2    | B-A wholetone            | A suspension                                | Alto    |
|     | 3    | F#-E wholetone           | E suspension                                | Tenor   |
|     | 4    | F#-G semitone            | Chord note iv <sup>11</sup> , A escape tone | Tenor   |
| 12  | 1    | F#-E wholetone           | E suspension                                | Tenor 2 |
|     | 2    | B-A wholetone            | A accented passing note                     | Tenor 2 |
|     | 3    | F#-G min 9th (semitone)  | G suspension                                | Tenor 2 |

It is clear that the non-harmonic note causing the dissonance is of a different type in each case. The point is, however, they all have the same effect which is what this analysis (hardly short of being tedious, but necessary) shows. These non-harmonic tones and the others parallel to them, not shown, are the real governors of the mood of the song. They start off as being reminiscent of 'imperfectly tuned' bird calls but become a harmonic, or more precisely non-harmonic motif with multiple musical purposes. Structurally, they bind the song into a whole; they evade the tonality which is central in determining the ambivalent mood of the song; and they enrich the texture whereby the warmth of dusk is reinforced (see example 40).

Another example of the extensive use of non-harmonic tones is to be found in "The Too Short Time". The greatest concentration appears in the *aria*-section of the song where the continuous stream of largely stepwise semi-quavers actually necessitates the use of non-essential tones. Virtually all types are represented:

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Suspension                         | Bar 21 <sup>1</sup> - D                |
| Accented passing note              | Bar 21 <sup>1b</sup> - B               |
| Accented lower auxiliary           | Bar 21 <sup>2</sup> - G#               |
| Passing note                       | Bar 21 <sup>2b</sup> - B               |
| Non-essential chord note           | Bar 22 <sup>1</sup> - C                |
| Accented chromatic <i>cambiata</i> | Bar 23 <sup>3</sup> - G# and B         |
| Chromatic passing note             | Bar 25 <sup>4b</sup> - B flat          |
| Lower auxiliary                    | Bar 26 <sup>2</sup> - D                |
| Accented upper auxiliary           | Bar 26 <sup>4</sup> - E                |
| Chromatic passing notes            | Bar 28 <sup>3a&amp;b</sup> - F# and G# |

Their function in this section is the creation, primarily, of continuous movement and, secondarily, of mild dissonance to support ambivalent feelings associated with "sunshine" and "frost", "designing" and "declining". The final example comes from "Overlooking The River", in which the use of the suspension is prominent, especially in the first two stanzas (b. 4<sup>1&4</sup>, 5<sup>2&3</sup>, 6<sup>3</sup>, 7<sup>2</sup>, 12<sup>4</sup>, 14<sup>2</sup>, 16<sup>1&4</sup>, 18<sup>1</sup>). The function of this is to create mild dissonance on the beat, portraying the glimmer of sunlight on the water.

One prominent occurrence of a vocal, non-harmonic tone (an accented *appoggiatura*) is the short, melismatic *acciaccatura* on the word "pouncing" in "Rollicum-Rorum" – an effective word-painting. A typical use of the accented appoggiatura and suspension as a means of expressing sorrow or empathy, is found in the short postlude of "In Years Defaced" (b. 36-39).

Example 23 In Years Defaced Bars 33 - 39

stood on the cau - sey kerb, All ea - ger to sell her ho - ney and ap - ples and  
 bun - ches of gar - den herb; And if she had of - fered to

### 7.3.3 Pedalpoint

The third device which Finzi employs to create dissonance is the use of pedalpoints. There are pedalpoints in at least eighteen of the fifty-one songs, used with varying degrees of success. The opening and closing sections of "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard" contain a substantial number of pedalpoints. The viola part sustains the C one octave below middle C (subdominant of the key) for twelve bars. The purpose is to provide the basis whence the symbolic growing into the upper air takes place in the remaining three parts. A chordal pedal (C and E) briefly recalls the opening procedure at the end of the song (b. 188-92).

In "Exeunt Omnes", a large-scale pedalpoint consisting of a five part-chord is sustained for the five opening bars while a modally-influenced vocal line sounds against it. The resulting dissonance serves the text "Everybody else, then, going", in which the poet expresses his isolation. In "A Young Man's Exhortation"

the words, "And men that moment after moment die" are accompanied by a two-note chordal pedalpoint (B and D b. 21<sup>3</sup>-23<sup>4</sup>). The stagnating effect of the pedalpoint supports the references to death. In the song "In A Churchyard", a long pedalpoint on the tonic (D) occurs in the upper part of the piano and is sustained for eight bars and joined, doubled in octaves, two octaves lower. Again the low register of these pedalnotes connects them with the deceased in the churchyard and the sinister atmosphere of the circumstances. A pedalnote on the new tonic (B) establishes a link with the opening section in the last eleven bars of the song. In the immediately preceding text, the poet accepts the opinion of the yew-tree that the deceased are better off than the living. This bleak acceptance prompts the return of the pedalnote as a musical reminder of the philosophy contained in the opening line (that the living "misjudge their lot").

The prelude of the song "Before and After Summer" contains a six bar pedalpoint chord suggesting the I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub> in D flat major. The melodic material against it, in which an upper auxiliary note takes active part, introduces and anticipates the dissonance which later in the song accompanies the sharp discomforts of winter. The opening bars of the song contain a positive element reflecting the words "Looking forward to the spring". The pedalnote (A b. 3<sup>2</sup>-8<sup>2</sup>) at the opening of "The Too Short Time" suggests the motionless fallen leaf and simultaneously provides the basis for growing dissonance against it as more leaves descend. In the prelude to the song "In Years Defaced", a pedalnote (F) causes considerable dissonance, which anticipates the melancholy gist of the poem, "In years defaced and lost, \ Two sat here transport-tossed". The patterns which emerge from these examples show that a pedalpoint often occurs at the opening and that low-pitched pedals are associated with death or something ominous.

#### 7.3.4 Natural leading note

A number of other harmonic characteristics are noticeable in the Hardy songs. In a minor key, the leading note is seldom raised. The result is that the dominant chord loses its significance and dominance as pointer towards the tonic. One of only two chromatic alterations in the song, "Two Lips", is an example of a raised leading note on the word, "shroud". In the f minor context, the E natural causes chord III<sup>+</sup><sub>7</sub> to be augmented, the dissonance serving the text well. In the e minor context of the song "I Say I'll Seek Her", the leading note (D) is raised only twice (b. 27 and 28) to increase dissonance in the interlude, suggesting the painful waiting of the beloved. The d minor section of "Shortening Days" (s. 1-6) contains no raised leading note. The result is a languid vagueness, appropriate to the description of the end of summer. The e minor context of "Former Beauties" lasts more or less to bar 34 (with small transitions to G major) and in this substantial section only a single D sharp occurs, namely the first note of the bass part of the piano.

### 7.3.5 Chord inversion

The next very obvious feature, from a harmonic point of view, is the incessant use of chords in inversion. In virtually all the early songs from *By Footpath and Stile*, chords, especially in first inversion, are encountered in strings of succession. In bars 44 to 45 of "The Master And The Leaves" the string  $\text{iii}^6\text{-IV}^6\text{-V}^6\text{-vi}^6$  occurs in an ascending line only vaguely related to the text, "We are fully woven for summer". More blatant, are the strings of first inversion chords in "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard". The first of these occurs in bars 71 to 73, descending from  $\text{I}^6$  almost two octaves downward to  $\text{ii}^6$ , while the second occurs in bars 153 to 154:  $\text{ii}^6\text{-iii}^6\text{-IV}^6\text{-V}^6$ . Bars 12 to 14<sup>1</sup> of "Rollicum-Rorum", with the text "he'll come pouncing down", are accompanied by another string of first inversion chords,  $\text{vi}^6\text{-V}^6\text{-IV}^6\text{-iii}^6\text{-ii}^6$ . None, other than the final example in which the descending movement reinforces the text, is directly related to the text but they do anticipate Finzi's later and more subtle use of first inversion as a colour entity. Second inversion chords are also used prominently, occasionally in successive strings as, for example, in "Exeunt Omnes" bar 20,  $\text{i}_4^6\text{-VII}_4^6\text{-VI}_4^6\text{-V}_4^6$  and "A Young Man's Exhortation" bar 16<sup>3</sup>-17<sup>1</sup>,  $\text{vi}_4^6\text{-V}_4^6\text{-IV}_4^6\text{-iii}_4^6\text{-ii}_4^6$ . These again, cannot be related directly to the text but rather serve as a broader search for an individual harmonic identity within traditional tonality. The tonic second inversion triad is often used to achieve a surprise modulation as is the case in "Childhood Among The Ferns" (b. 6, 23, 37, 45, 63 and 66) and "Life Laughs Onward" (b. 9, 10, 12, 21 and 23). Triads extended to the seventh are also often found in inversion. Of these chords, the third inversion ( $^4_2$ ), is the most unstable and dissonant and it is of these characteristics that Finzi makes full use. In "Exeunt Omnes", a string of third inversion chords is found in bar 8,  $\text{v}_2^4\text{-iv}_2^4\text{-VI}_2^4\text{-v}_2^4$  as part of an interlude which gives a musical impression of a noisy fair. Chord  $\text{I}_2^4$  occurs a number of times in "Budmouth Dears" (b. 24<sup>2</sup>, 29<sup>3</sup>, 31<sup>2</sup>, 32<sup>2</sup>, 33<sup>2</sup> and 44<sup>4</sup>) to give a boisterous, military effect.

### 7.3.6 Cadences

Final cadences, like the frequent turn of thought in the final lines of Hardy's poems, often contain a similar procedure translated into music. For the unusually positive ending of the poem, "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly", Finzi provides an equally positive ending except that the third of the dominant chord is suddenly lowered, rendering, at the final moment, shadows of doubt about the success of the "pilgrimage". It is possible that the composer here internalizes the text and displays his own doubts, not about Hardy's "pilgrimage" but his own. The outcome of the poem, "Two Lips", is that the poet eventually, after kissing these in every conceivable circumstance also kisses the lips of his deceased beloved. The final cadence follows

suit with a Neapolitan chord in second inversion followed by a tonic chord in second inversion, to be redeemed only in the final bar with a root position. The final cadence of "I Need Not Go" occurs with the text, "She will not blame me, \ But suffer it so." On the word, "blame" the leading note is suddenly lowered and results in lowered chord vii (now minor). The implication is that the composer, on behalf of the poet, is not so sure that the latter will not be blamed. The postlude of "At A Lunar Eclipse" starts in D major and seems to be heading for a cadence in D major but the final two chords are suddenly a plagal cadence in b minor with a *tierce di Picardi*. The positive ending answers the final question in the poem: can the earth be so insignificant, even though it contains "woman fairer than the skies?", in the affirmative. The sole example of chromaticism in the cadence at the end of "Let Me Enjoy" has been discussed in section 7.2.1. At the end of the song "Amabel", the perfect cadence is also distorted by the lowering of the leading note, here showing the last remnant of regret on the part of the poet for the demise of desirability. The final cadence of "Epeisodia" coincides with the words "rest we"; Finzi lowers the sixth chord to create a mixed plagal cadence, casting doubt on the quality of this "rest". The list continues but the pattern is established: the composer stays alert and meticulous in his setting of the Hardy poems up to the final cadence of each song, occasionally casting a side-ways comment of his own.

### 7.3.7 Harmonic ostinato

The use of harmonic *ostinato* occurs in a number of songs. More than half of the long introduction to "Paying Calls" consists of a slow *tremolo* pattern spread over two bars. The effect is a numbing lull, a sense of being trapped which foreshadows the theme of isolation in the cycle *By Footpath and Stile*. To round off the cycle, the final song, "Exeunt Omnes", closes with the same *ostinato* pattern. In "Budmouth Dears", a harmonic *ostinato* is established to accompany the third stanza. This figure (b. 25-28) represents the composer's impression of a not-too-distant battle during which the troopers think about the "Budmouth Dears". The *ostinato*, consisting of four descending steps, in "When I Set Out For Lyonesse" (b. 4-7, 9, 11, 15-16, 20-24, 38, 41-43 and 60-63) recurs at regular intervals and leaves a strong impression of the poet's movement to and from "Lyonesse". A sense of pilgrimage on foot is suggested here, even though the poet would not in fact have gone on foot. The *ostinatos* in "Childhood Among The Ferns", suggesting different degrees of rain, have been discussed in an earlier section. Two extended harmonic *ostinatos* occur in "He Abjures Love" (b. 46-53 and 111-116). The purpose of this low pitched rumble is, in both cases, to increase the dramatic tension. The final complex *ostinato* is to be found at the opening of the song, "At Middle-Field Gate In February" (see example 20), and has the effect of focusing the listener's attention on the description which follows in the text.

### 7.3.8 Specific harmonic settings

It remains to highlight a number of individual chordal settings which are particularly appropriate for the context. These also have the function of being harmonic accents. Examples which have been discussed earlier under different headings will be omitted here. In "Her Temple", on the word "knows" (b. 17), chord IV (altered to become a major triad in f minor) is furnished with an added minor second (C flat) which occurs in the bass. The dissonance emphasizes the text and underlines the emotional uncertainty of the poet – as experienced by Hardy periodically for the first fifty years of his life. An interesting musical comment accompanies the word "unfretting" in "The Sigh". Chord VII<sup>9</sup> is altered (the leading note lowered) momentarily, suggesting that the poet is not as "unfretting" as he might want to be. In "The Phantom" on the word, "everywhere" (b. 71), a bi-tonal chord (E-G sharp-B and G-B flat-D) harmonically emphasizes the moment and reinforces the meaning. The word "ache" (b. 28), in the song "In A Churchyard", is also accompanied by a bi-tonal super-imposition of two triads a semi-tone away from one another (C-E-G and D flat-F-A flat). This setting reinforces the painful emotional content of the text. The song, "Channel Firing", contains two important harmonic features, namely augmented chords and chords containing additional tones. Chromatic chords (remnants from the Romantic harmonic language) are used a number of times. The chords are invariably disguised with interfering non-harmonic tones or the occasional added tone but the basic sound-structure remains clearly audible: French Augmented chord - bars 37<sup>1</sup>, 39<sup>3</sup> and 64<sup>4</sup>; German Augmented chord - bar 37<sup>2</sup>; Neapolitan chord -bars 23<sup>4</sup>, 28<sup>3</sup>, 32<sup>3</sup>, 48<sup>4</sup>, 53<sup>4</sup>, 58<sup>2&4</sup>, 66<sup>4</sup> and 75<sup>1</sup>. All these chords have a dramatic function, and are well-suited in a very dramatic song. There are also a number of chords furnished with added tones (b. 15<sup>3</sup>, 17-8, 22<sup>4</sup>, 59<sup>1</sup>, 64<sup>2</sup> and 72<sup>3b</sup>) but the most prominent of these is the gunfire motif. Seen as an harmonic entity, the harmony is chord III with an added perfect fourth. The dissonance results from two *ostinato* patterns meeting almost accidentally: the slow-moving bass chord from beat 1 to 4 collides with the gunfire motif (chord VI<sup>7</sup> seen on its own) after beat three.

Example 24 Channel Firing Bars 16 - 21

gun - ne - ry prac - tice out at sea Just as be - fore you went be - low; .....

*g basso* .....

The song, "In the Mind's Eye" contains a bi-tonal chord (B-D-F sharp and B flat-D-F) on the exasperated sigh: "Ah; 'tis but her phantom". The emotional torture experienced through the absence of the beloved, the theme of the poem, is well captured. In "He Abjures Love" the dramatic text, "Too many times ablaze \ With fatuous fires", continues the tirade against love and the phrase opens with a bi-tonal super-imposition of two triads on the word, "Too" (b. 64 C sharp-E sharp-G sharp and G-B-D). In the song "I Look into my Glass" the words, "And shakes this fragile frame", (b. 13-14) reflect the poet's strong accusation of time's destruction of the human body while leaving emotional awareness and sexual urges virtually untouched. It is this tragic awareness of the "throbbings of noontide" – intense emotional longing and unwelcome sexual desires past middle age – which is set by Finzi with some harsh dissonances in the form of bi-tonal chords on the words, "shakes" (C sharp-E-G sharp and G-B flat-D flat) and "fragile" (D-F sharp-A and F-A-C). To extend the dissonance further, an accented appoggiatura, C natural in the vocal part (doubled on the piano), sounds against the C sharp in the bass of the piano part on the word, "shakes". The composer's empathy with these real nightmares of advancing years shows itself not only in the sensitive setting of a Hardy text but also in great insight into the fragility of a man's most private existence.

Example 25 I Look Into My Glass Bars 13 - 17

steals, lets part a-bide; And shakes this fra-gile frame at eve With

A final example of Finzi's use of more venturesome harmony is to be found in his last Hardy song, "I Said To Love". Chromaticism plays an important role therein, enhancing the meaning of a text filled with anger and disillusionment. The table below shows the widespread occurrence of altered chords from the eleventh bar and the extent to which the composer is prepared to change certain chords for the sake of the dissonance he requires at a particular moment.

| Bar | Beat | Key                 | Chord/Note   | Suggested reason/s                                       |
|-----|------|---------------------|--|--|
| 11  | 1    | C maj               | iv (A flat)  | Soften sound on "Boy"                                    |
| 12  | 1-2  | C maj               | vii (B flat)   | Piano part suggest a doubting of text                    |
| 25  | 3    | D maj               | iv <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> (C)   | Pleading tone set with minor chord                       |
| 28  | 2    | G maj               | D# - suspension  | Harmonic emphasis - dissonance                           |
| 32  | 1    | g min               | Ger <sup>6</sup><br>add aug 2nd  | Foreshadows the criticism of Love,<br>disgust with Love  |
| 33  | 4    | g min               | V <sup>9</sup> V (C#)  | Emphasis of negative qualities                           |
| 34  | 1    | g min               | V <sup>7</sup> add dim 5th   | Emphasis of negative qualities                           |
| 42  | 1    | f min               | V add min 2nd  | Reinforce meaning: "iron daggers"                        |
| 42  | 3    | f min               | VII add maj 2nd  | Reinforce meaning: "iron daggers"                        |
| 45  | 3-4  | f min               | Two chords<br>from f# min,<br>superimposed:<br>I <sup>+</sup> & III        | Heightened dissonance - anticipates dismissal<br>of Love |
| 50  |      | Atonal              | Free melodic<br>chromaticism   | What the world would be like in the<br>absence of love   |
| 52  | 1    | f min               | I (A natural)<br>superimposed on<br>I <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> from B maj | Word-painting of "perish" -<br>dissonance                |
| 60  | 1-2  | f min               | C flat, B double<br>flat   | Word-painting of "apathy" -<br>dissonance                |
| 63  | 1    | c min/E<br>flat maj | iv <sup>7</sup> with dim 5th   | Reinforce meaning: "cease"                               |

The first vocal climax of "I Said To Love" is reached in bar 36 (E flat on the word "elfin") and a harmonic surge anticipates and prepares this climax from bar 32.

Example 26 I Said To Love Bars 29 - 36

The musical score for Example 26, "I Said To Love" (Bars 29-36), is presented in two systems. The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for bars 29-32. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "him..... I said to Love,.....". The piano accompaniment features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, with dynamic markings of *mf* and *f*. The tempo is marked *a tempo*. The second system shows bars 33-36. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "..... "Thou art not young, thou art not fair, No el - fin darts, no". The piano accompaniment continues with a more complex harmonic structure, including a *ff* dynamic marking. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 4/4 time signature.

It is the writer's opinion that these 'modern' aspects of Finzi's harmonic language (tonal vagueness, extended tonality, chromaticism, triad extension etc.) within the admittedly larger tonal framework of his output, have been neglected in earlier studies in a somewhat sweeping attempt to categorize the composer as 'late-romantic' (or 'belated romantic'), 'conservative' or 'minor', none of which can be seriously justified.

## 7.4 Contrapuntal procedures

### 7.4.1 Free counterpoint

The use of contrapuntal procedures is intrinsic to Finzi's style. There is hardly a song in which free counterpoint, imitation between voice and piano material or in the piano accompaniment internally, does not occur. Even in songs with a more chordal accompaniment (At Middle-Field Gate In February or So I Have Fared) or with an accompaniment which relies on the spinning of figuration (Overlooking The River or Transformations), snatches of imitation occur. One of the weaknesses of Finzi's use of counterpoint is that it has more of a structural than a semantic function. Although there are few examples where counterpoint is

directly related to the textual meaning, this kind of 'self-indulgence' or self-referential procedure can only be part of an effective setting if the text suggests it, as is the case in "I Look into my Glass" (b. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10-11, 14) Here, very subtle cross-references, in the piano part mainly, support the idea of the poet's image reflected in a mirror.

The structural role of counterpoint is significant as a means to create unity in a song (At A Lunar Eclipse, Waiting Both, A Young Man's Exhortation and For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly). The unmetred song "At A Lunar Eclipse" contains examples of a close-knit contrapuntal procedure, only tenuously related to the meaning. A three-part *stretto* of the opening motif occurs in systems 1, 6 and 9 - 10. The repeated use of this motif and its imitation has a strong unifying effect in the song.

Example 27 At A Lunar Eclipse Systems 1, 6 and 9 - 10

Andante sostenuto ♩ = c. 63

VOICE

Thy sha - dow, Earth, from Pole.. to

PIANO

*pp sostenuto sempre, senza accento*

*cresc.* Poco allargando

youn - ger, youn - ger she grew, to the year I first had known Her woman - grown, And I cried,

*cresc.*

hemmed within the coasts you arc implies?.....

Is such... the stellar gauge... of earthly show, ..... Nation at war with

Another song which contains a large number of cross-references between piano and voice and piano accompaniment internally is "Amabel". These create a strong effect of cohesion.

Voice and Piano:

- Bar 8<sup>1-2</sup> voice and piano - 8<sup>3-4</sup> piano (alto)
- Bar 10<sup>1-2</sup> voice and piano - 10<sup>3-4</sup> piano (bass)
- Bar 11<sup>1-2</sup> piano (alto) - 12<sup>1-2</sup> voice - 12<sup>3-4</sup> piano (bass)
- Bar 21<sup>1-2</sup> voice - 21<sup>3-4</sup> piano (alto)
- Bar 29<sup>1-2</sup> voice - 29<sup>2-3</sup> piano (alto)
- Bar 32<sup>2b-4</sup> piano (soprano) - 32<sup>4</sup>-33<sup>2</sup> voice

Piano Internally:

- Bar 6<sup>1-2</sup> soprano - 6<sup>3-4</sup> alto - 7<sup>1-2</sup> bass
- Bar 14<sup>1-2</sup> bass - 14<sup>3-4</sup> alto
- Bar 28<sup>1-2</sup> bass - 28<sup>3-4</sup> alto
- Bar 34<sup>1-2</sup> soprano - 34<sup>3-4</sup> alto

#### 7.4.2 Counterpoint with a semantic function

Examples of the use of contrapuntal procedures with a more semantic function are encountered in a few songs. The imitation of the descending 'sighing' motif in the prelude to and postlude of "The Sigh" creates the impression of a somewhat exasperated weariness (see example 16). The recurring image of the "ghost-girl rider" in "The Phantom" fully justifies the imitation of the rider motif in various guises (b. 1-2, 61-62, 76-77, 85-88, 92-95, 102-103 and 106-107). Two immediate echoes of the vocal line in the piano part of the song "Channel Firing" have an ironic mocking effect. The first is God's cynical laugh, "Ha, ha" in bar 41 and the second two bars later in bar 43 where a reference to the blowing of the final trumpet is immediately echoed in the piano, with dramatic effect. The musical irony lies in the words which immediately follow in parenthesis, "if indeed I ever do"; they cast doubt on there ever being a final trumpet. The melodic fragment which sets the climactic exclamation, "So let it be" (b. 64), in the song "I Said To Love" reinforces the gravity of the utterance by imitation in the piano accompaniment of the same bar.

#### 7.5 Summary

An interval analysis of the vocal part clearly shows Finzi's preference for the use of smaller intervals. All larger intervals of which the use of the perfect fifth is the most prominent, are related to the textual meaning, often directly reinforcing it, capturing the emotional content or changing the tessitura. Broadly speaking, three styles of vocal composition emerge: parlando, folksong and aria. Finzi follows two practices concerning vocal climax, namely the true climax of single highest pitch in a song, and a so-called climactic 'ceiling'. As with the rhythmic material, melodic motifs are employed to achieve phonological magic, structural unity and semantic reinforcement. Finzi's use of ultra-traditional tonality and watery modality (Banfield 1985:280) has been the main reason for criticising his style. Although compositional conservatism is an integral part of his harmonic and tonal vocabulary, the importance of the principle of appropriateness has been stressed and examples of more venturesome passages have been highlighted in this chapter. Contrapuntal procedures occur in two guises: general free counterpoint with a structural function and more stricter imitation with a directly semantic reinforcement of the text.

## CHAPTER 8

### Dynamics

The composer's use of levels of loudness (or dynamics) are explored in the present chapter. The main focus are the dynamic tendencies and their relation to meaning and atmosphere. It is, however, important to note Finzi's attitude towards this element of music in order to understand how he incorporates it into his settings. Howard Ferguson, in *Music and Letters Vol. 38* (1957) says:

When first I knew Finzi he suffered from acute uncertainty over matters of detail in his own music: not only choosing between several slightly different versions of a phrase, but in all questions of articulation and dynamics. With the latter he tended to solve the difficulty by leaving out such indications altogether, until it was pointed out to him that this did not make the life of the performer any easier. He would then agree, rather reluctantly, to a *piano* here and a *forte* there, and an occasional slur to show the beginning and ending of a phrase, adding under his breath that the performer, if he were any sort of musician, would instinctively do it like that anyway. (1957:132-33)

#### 8.1 Few dynamic markings

Six of the songs have very few dynamic markings, three of which are from the early cycle, *By Footpath and Stile* (Where The Picnic Was, The Oxen and The Master And The Leaves) and the others from later collections (Waiting Both, So I Have Fared and For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly). The large majority contains only the most necessary dynamic markings and a small number (The Phantom, Channel Firing, He Abjures Love and I Said To Love) have many dynamic markings. Dynamic level markings are mostly present in the piano part. As far as markings in the vocal part are concerned the tendency is slightly different. Twenty-one of the songs contain no markings (Summer Schemes and The Market-Girl) or a single indication (Her Temple and Epeisodia) in the vocal part. Of the twenty-nine remaining songs (excluding Only A Man Harrowing Clods) in which markings are used in the vocal part, it is clear that these coincide with the markings in the piano part and that the voice should follow the indications given in the piano part when nothing else is provided. Finzi's confidence in the integrity of the performer as is the case with the lack of indications for pedalling in the piano part was unshakable and his sometimes 'cryptic' markings bear testimony to the fact.

#### 8.2 Low dynamic level markings

To establish a pattern in Finzi's use of dynamic markings, it is necessary to categorize songs employing similar level markings. There are four songs which have a *niente*-ending. These are "Exeunt Omnes", "The Comet At Yell'ham" (see example 4), "In Years Defaced" (see example 23) and "I Look Into My Glass" (see example

25). The link between these songs is the undertone of despondency and isolation which intensifies towards the end of the song. The decrease in dynamic energy represented by the *niente*-ending, therefore supports the textual meaning directly. The best example is to be found in the final bar of "Exeunt Omnes". The prophetic opening line, "Everybody else, then, going", is fulfilled in the *niente*-ending – even the sound of the accompaniment fades into nothing.

Example 28 Exeunt Omnes Bars 73 - 83

In the poem "The Oxen", Hardy considers hope – the hope that the mystical or supernatural aspects of the Christian religion may be true. Finzi, an agnostic, identified with these sentiments as a young man early in the 1920s and makes a very quiet setting of the poem in which he captures this faint hope, largely as a result of the restrained dynamic levels. He also revised this song in the 1940s without substantially changing it (Ferguson 1981:iii). The dynamic levels vary from *p* to *ppp*, the former occurring at the opening and with the text, "Come see the oxen kneel" and the latter with the text, "So fair a fancy few would weave". The very quiet atmosphere of a make-believe Christmas Eve is therefore aptly captured.

Two songs "The Comet At Yell'ham" and "At A Lunar Eclipse", deal with the distant stellar universe and man's mystical fascination with it. The dynamic level of the former (*p - ppp*) is instrumental in achieving a sense of distance between the onlookers and the comet. In the latter there is no other indication than *pp* apart from 'hairpin' *crescendos* and *decrescendos*. The key example in the text occurs in the first stanza, "Thy shadow, Earth... Now steals along". Not even the reference to war, towards the end of the poem, tempts the composer to change the dynamic level. This deliberate restraint is not mere lack of dynamic marking but a conscious attempt to achieve the evenness and serenity referred to in the text (see example 25).

### 8.3 Low dynamic level marking with exception

A second group of songs also using in a relatively narrow band of dynamics markings, include: "At Middle-Field Gate In February", "Two Lips", "The Self-Unseeing", "Overlooking The River" and "Epeisodia". These are all restrained between the levels *pp* and *mf* and the common thread that runs through is exactly that, restraint. The loudest moment in the song, "At Middle-Field Gate In February" (which is written in the composer's own hand, and not that of the editors), is *mp* in the third last bar (b. 31). The melodic material here is derived from that occurring earlier (b. 22-3) with the text, "How dry it was" and serves as the short postlude of the song. The mental link with the past is thereby reinforced at the end of the song. The rest of the song hovers around the *piano* level in keeping with the bleak, wintry atmosphere. "Two Lips" opens at the *pp* level supporting the lightness of a youthful kiss. The *mf* marking occurs twice: on the word "shroud" (b. 18) and just after the word, "She" (b. 21) at the end of the song. Both these emphasize the tragic aspect of the last kiss after the beloved's death. In "The Self-Unseeing", the *pp* marking lasts for the first 21 bars of the song. The opening words, "Here is the ancient floor", is accompanied by an eerie, chordal dissonance and, at the quiet dynamic level also supports the idea of the distant past being recalled. There are only two sections with a slightly higher dynamic level, namely the reference to pleasant memories (*p* from bar 22 and *cresc.* from b. 42). The ambiguous, regretful close of the song returns to the *pp* level. The poem, "Overlooking The River Stour" is a precise description of a river scene at dusk which captures the ambivalence of a beautiful and atmospheric moment fading away gradually. A characteristic twist in the final lines makes the reader realise that there is more than meets the eye. It becomes clear that the poet regrets not having paid more attention to his beloved who remains silent and motionless behind him. The slowly fading beauty of the sunset becomes symbolic of an equally slowly fading relationship which the poet regrets in retrospect. The same dynamic restraint is used here. No level higher than *mp* occurs until bar 35 where a single brief *mf* indicated in the final stanza on the words, "drop-drenched glaze". It must again be stressed that the consistency of the dynamic levels is not the result of a mere lack of indication but rather a deliberate restraint to ensure maintenance of the sensitive atmosphere.

*Poco ritard.*  *A tempo* 



And ne-ver I turned my head, a-lack, While these things met my gaze....Through the

pane's drop-drenched glaze,.... To see the more be-hind my back... O

In "Eepisodia", the highest dynamic level is *mf* and it occurs only once (b. 57) in the final stanza. This relatively louder level complies with the positive sentiments of the return to a pastoral existence. The middle stanza (which refers to the blight of urban living) is expressed by a *pp* level throughout which effectively creates a dark, despondent atmosphere (see example 13).

#### 8.4 Extreme dynamic markings

Thirty-nine of the songs employ both extremes of dynamic range. This tendency is amplified in the more dramatic songs: "I Say I'll Seek Her" (*pp - ff*), "Shortening Days" (*pp - fff*), "Transformations" (*pp - fff*), "The Clock Of The Years" (*pp - fff*), "Channel Firing" (*pp - fff violente*), "He Abjures Love" (*pp - ff*), "Amabel" (*pp - ff*) and "I Said To Love" (*p - fff*). The ecstatic opening utterance, "I say I'll seek her" (from the song with the same title), is accompanied by a *ff* marking which subsides within nine beats, never to return. Instead, a *pp* marking supported later by *lontano*, dominates the last 17 bars of the song. The reason for the use of this dynamic level is to support sensitively the hesitation of the lover to go to his beloved. The energy of musical dynamics subsides with the failing energy of passion and the growing uncertainty. The two songs, "Shortening Days" and "Transformations" follow a similar procedure: a quiet, dolorous opening (*pp*) and a

thundering, joyous end (*fff*). In the former the description of the advent of winter is coupled with low dynamic levels (s. 1 and 3) while the prospect of harvest festivities and cider-making is accompanied by high dynamic levels (b. 13-17). In the latter the slow progress of the deceased from their underground abodes into the "upper air" is followed in the dynamic levels used in the song: *pp* (b. 1) *cresc.* (b. 12) *f* (b. 15) *mf* (b. 16) *mp* (b. 18), *p* (b. 23) *poco a poco più animato cresc.* (b. 41-2) *fff* (b. 46). The initial temptation (b. 1 *f*) and final scorn (b. 61-5 *f-fff*) of the spirit in "The Clock Of The Years", is set at similar levels while the long middle section contains a wide variety of markings always closely connected to the text: *p* for the text, "He answered, 'Peace'" (b. 9-10); *f* for the poet's exclamation, "'Cease! Thus far is good'", attempting to stop the diminishing image (b. 14-5); *mp* for the words, "But alas for me" (b. 19); *p* accompanies the reference to the image's shrinking to "babyhood" (b. 24); *pp* for the words, "Still less in mien \ To my great sorrow" (b.26-7); and the *f* reinforces, in modified imitation, the moment when the image finally vanishes (b. 40) (see example 14).

### 8.5 High dynamic level marking

A number of prominent dynamic settings also needs to be highlighted. Pleasant, pastoral merry-making is referred to in the middle of the otherwise melancholic song, "The Dance Continued". The words, "Yet gaily sing" (b. 31), are suddenly and aptly furnished with *ff* which lasts for seven bars. Similarly, in "Exeunt Omnes", reference is made to a noisy fairground and this section is accompanied with *ff* markings (b. 7 and 15). The two marching songs, "Budmouth Dears" (b. 1, 22, 34, 44 and 48) and "Rollicum-Rorum" (b. 0<sup>2</sup>, 5, 11, 21, 24, 34, 42, 47, 50, 67, 70, 74, 84, 86, 92, 97 and 99), contain many *f*, *ff* and the occasional *fs*, *ffz* or accent marking to achieve the boisterous vulgarity associated with a military camp.

In a completely different pastoral setting described in "Summer Schemes", the "minims, shakes and trills" (b. 18-21) of birdsong, are accompanied by a *f* marking. "Waiting Both", one of three songs dealing with man's relation to the stellar universe, has very quiet opening and closing sections. Towards the end of the song, however, following the man's answer to the star's searching question in the words, "'Till my change come", the piano, in an interlude, has a violent outburst (b. 19-23 *p crescendo molto - ff - p*). This is one of the examples where the composer allows himself a private musical comment: a momentary rebellion against man's incompleteness and fragile uncertainty. There are references to the final trumpet in three of the songs: "In A Churchyard", "Channel Firing" and "Amabel". In bar 50 of "In A Churchyard", a 'trumpet' motif is furnished with accents at the *f* level and echoed immediately in bar 51.

Example 30 In A Churchyard Bars 48 - 54

*Largamente.*

- larged in scope,..... That no God trumpet us to

*mp* *mf* *f*

*Ritard. molto.*

rise..... We tru - - ly hope!"

*p* *mp*

The 'trumpet' motif in "Channel Firing" (b. 43), built on the same rhythmic material as in the previous song, is also accented and occurs at the *fff* level accompanying the angry voice of God.

Example 31 Channel Firing Bars 41 - 44

*Allargando molto* *al*

"Ha, ha. .... It will be warm - er when I

*mf* *ff* *fff*

Tempo I

blow the trum-pet ..... (if in - deed ..... I ev - er do;

*mp subito*

The reference to the "Last Trump" (b. 35) in the song "Amabel", is accompanied by an *ff* marking in both piano and vocal parts though there is no specific trumpet motif. A thick, chordal texture, dissonance and strong dynamic accents further enhance the dramatic qualities of the setting.

Example 32 Amabel Bars 34 - 39

*ff* *Largamente*

fling a - cross the gate, ..... 'Till the Last Trump, ..... fare - well, .....

*ff*

A tempo, slentando al fine

Ritard. molto

..... O Am - a - bell! .....

*p* *mp* *pp*

Some of the discomforts of winter are described in the poem, "Before And After Summer", with the words, "And these shafts of sleet \ Sharper pointed than the first". At the word "pointed" (b. 20), a *f* dynamic level is specified with the right hand material in the extremely high register (see example 7). In the song "He

Abjures Love", the vocalized outrage, "At last I put off love" (b. 1) is preceded by a brief prelude which foreshadows the vocal material, is accented and marked *f*. By contrast, the final line of the poem, "And then, the Curtain" is set at the *p* (b. 128) and still later the *pp* (b. 131) levels. As in so many other songs, anger and frustration are set at the louder level while disillusionment and despondency are at a quieter level. The harshest dynamic level is to be found in Finzi's last Hardy song, "I Said To Love". In the third last bar (b. 68), after the final rejection of love, despite the possible extinction of man, Finzi marks *fff* *violente*.

## 8.6 Dynamic accent

As far as dynamic accents are concerned, Finzi's practice is sober and conservative. The *portamento* and two stronger accents (^ and >) are used. Three different Italian-term accents are also used: *sf*, *sfz*, *fz*. There is a curious 'gradual' accent (<>) marked six times in three songs from *Earth and Air and Rain*, namely "Summer Schemes" (b. 34), "The Phantom" (b. 42 and 43) and "The Clock Of The Years" (b. 48, 49 and 50). This 'gradual' accent, occurring on a single pitch, can hardly be realized on the piano literally (while being possible on a wind instrument). The only possible interpretation for use on the piano would be to have a relatively sharp increase and decrease of pressure to and from the indicated pitch. Occurring in the same volume, it seems more like an experiment in dynamic marking than a serious innovation by the composer. There is also one song, "At A Lunar Eclipse" in which the composer specifically indicates *senza accento* at the opening. This indication is entirely appropriate when the meaning of the text is considered. The earth's shadow which slowly progresses across the moon is described as moving with "imperturbable serenity" and an unaccented accompaniment enhances this idea.

*Portamento* accents in the piano part, are used in virtually every song. Three tendencies emerge in terms of their function. Firstly, they act as mild or low-level accents on individual pitches or melodic fragments as is the case in, "The Clock Of The Years" (b. 17) where the vocal motif of the preceding bar is echoed in the piano part. Secondly, the *portamento* accent is used to ensure that longer or prolonged pitches last properly for the entire duration, as in "Transformations" (b. 2) and "To Lizbie Brown" (b. 1, 15, 65). Thirdly, a *portamento* is used to indicate a 'hidden' melody in a complex figure, for example in "Summer Schemes" (b. 16-7) and "Before And After Summer" (b. 27-30)) or in an inner voice which may be part of a contrapuntal texture, for example in "The Dance Continued" (b. 17-19), "So I Have Fared" (b. 46-7), "Before And After Summer" (b. 3, 7 and 48), "He Abjures Love" (b. 47-54 and 111-4) and "I Look Into My Glass" (b. 1-2).

The strongest specific accents are indicated by Italian terms. In the song, "The Phantom", a *sf* and accent (^) are used on a bi-tonal chord with the word, "everywhere" (b. 71) emphasizing the multiplicity of the image that haunts the man. Closer to the end of the song at the climactic moment where the "ghost-girl rider" defiantly mocks him for the last time, a *sfz* (b. 104) marking occurs with an accent (^). "Rollicum-Rorum" is one of the songs with the most abundant use of accents. The satirical, soldierly atmosphere is supported by frequent, strong accents including *sf* (b. 11) and *sfz* (b. 97).

Example 33 Rollicum-Rorum Bars 95 - 99

The image shows a musical score for Example 33, "Rollicum-Rorum", bars 95-99. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are "tol-lol - layl" followed by a dotted line. The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature. It features several dynamic markings: *ff* (fortissimo) and *sfz* (sforzando) with accents (^) over notes. The piano part has a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many beamed notes and rests.

In the song "In the Mind's Eye" an *sfz* occurs (b. 21 and 24) to accentuate two passages in the piano part which support the emotional turmoil of the poet. In the song "In Years Defaced" (b. 13), the musical afterthought to the words, "That could not be", suddenly brings the full implication of these words home. Finzi uses an *fz* indication to reinforce this realization.

The frequency and significance of the remainder of the stronger accents is proportional to the dramatic content of the song. This means that songs like "The Phantom", "The Clock Of The Years", "Channel Firing", "He Abjures Love" and "I Said To Love" contain many of these accents (see examples 6, 14, 15, 24, 26, 31 and 33). The function of a strong accent in the Hardy songs, is always dramatic and occasionally has the function of tampering with the metre of the song internally, as in "The Dance Continued" (b. 33-6).

### 8.7 Dynamic accent in the vocal part

As with the other dynamic marking, the vocal part contains few accents. Most of the markings are *portamentos* and suggest a mild accentuation of the specific word or syllable, highlighting the meaning or the emotional content of the text. A number of examples follow:

| Name of Song              | Bar              | Word's                               | Function                      |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I Say I'll Seek Her       | 30               | waiting                              | Emotional content             |
| A Young Man's Exhortation | 26               | most...the king                      | Emotional content             |
| Budmouth Dears            | 11, 21,<br>33,43 | clink, clink                         | Emphasis                      |
| Her Temple                | 17-8             | his Name                             | Emotional content             |
| Former Beauties           | 6                | They                                 | Emphasis                      |
| Waiting Both              | 28               | <u>So</u> mean I<br><u>So</u> mean I | Emphasis & emotional content  |
| To Lizbie Brown           | 39<br>60-1       | best<br>And who was he?              | Emphasis<br>Emphasis          |
| Overlooking The River     | 25               | golden and                           | Emotional content             |
| Channel Firing            | 18<br>23         | No<br><u>Used</u> to be              | Emphasis<br>Emotional content |
| He Abjures Love           | 117-8            | Clear views and certain              | Emphasis                      |
| In Five-Score Summers     | 11<br>23         | dust or two<br>my                    | Emphasis<br>Emphasis          |
| I Said To Love            | 41<br>56         | pitiless<br>nothing                  | Emotional content<br>Emphasis |

Stronger accents in the vocal part, occur only in three of the more dramatic songs. In "The Phantom" (b. 56) the word "keen" is furnished with a stronger accent (>), emphasizing the fervour with which the haunted man remembers the girl of his youth. "Channel Firing" contains three strong accents (> and ^) in bar 72 on the words "to avenge", the strongest being on the last syllable. The angry context is the reference to the "roaring" guns which have resumed their practice firing at this stage in the song. The piano part anticipates with three bursts of firing (b. 71-72<sup>1</sup>) and echoes with another three shots immediately following in bar 72<sup>2-3</sup>.

Example 34 Channel Firing Bars 70 - 73

- turbed the hour, ..... Roar-ing their rea-di - ness .....  
 ..... to a - venge, ..... As far in - land as Stour-ton

*mp subito* *f cresc.* *mp* *mp diminuendo*

Allargando molto Ritardando e perdendosi

Two more examples of strong accents in the vocal part occur in the song, "In Years Defaced". The words, "Foul" (b. 22) and "everywhere" (b. 24), are accented (^). The second is more significant as a result of its placing on a climactic pitch.

### 8.8 Summary

In his earlier works Finzi uses fewer dynamic markings while mature works are amply supplied with these. The *niente*-marking at the end of a setting is an indication peculiar to Finzi. The number of lower-level markings tend to overshadow other types but the full range is employed and is always appropriate to the particular meaning or atmosphere of a song. Dynamic accents usually reinforce dissonance which in turn is related to dramatic aspects in the text. The mild *portamento* accent is the most frequently used accent and occurs in virtually every song. There are relatively few markings in the vocal part. It is clear, by implication, that, where there are no separate markings in the vocal part, it should follow the markings in the piano part. Finzi's use of dynamic markings exhibits his characteristic conservative frame of mind: each marking is carefully considered and placed where the intelligibility of the music will suffer without it.

## CHAPTER 9

### Texture

In this chapter the density of musical material as a compositional element is considered. Broadly speaking, three types of textural potential accompany the Hardy songs. Forty-four of the songs (86%) are accompanied by the piano, six by a string quartet (12%) and a single song by small orchestra (2%). These three textural potential types will be discussed separately and the focus will be on the occasions where the density of the musical material reinforces the meaning or atmosphere of the text. An indication of the density of a particular texture consistently refers to that of the accompaniment, unless stated otherwise.

#### 9.1 The texture potential of the piano accompaniments

The texture potential of the piano is limited by two factors: the range of the instrument (roughly seven octaves) and the number of pitches that sounds together (the number comfortably playable by a professional performer).

The aspect of range has been referred to in the chapter on Timbre (chapter 5) simply because the specific register of the piano employed in the accompaniment has a stronger influence on the timbre than on the texture although the latter is also influenced by it.

The density aspect (how many pitches sound at once) has a number of variables. Firstly, the composer's knowledge of or proficiency on the instrument will influence his application of the potential textures. Secondly, the more sounds that are used simultaneously, the more cluttered or dense the texture will be (and vice versa). Lastly, the distance between simultaneously sounding pitches also influences the texture: the closer the pitches are huddled together, the denser the texture and the wider the distance between pitches, the more transparent the texture.

##### 9.1.1 The most commonly used texture

A three- and four-part textures are the most commonly used textures in the piano accompaniments of the Hardy songs. A prime example is the 86% four-part texture in the song, "It Never Looks Like Summer". (Percentages of varying textures for each song have been obtained by classifying all the bars and dividing each category by the number of bars in the song.) There are also songs with a substantially more transparent texture, "I Need Not Go" (88% 2-3 part texture) and "Two Lips" (84% 2-4 part texture), and songs with a

substantially denser texture, "Rollicum-Rorum" (81% 4-6 part texture), "At Middle-Field Gate In February" (88% 4-6 part texture) and "At A Lunar Eclipse (85% 4-6 part texture). In two songs complete silence as a dramatic pause, occurs in the vocal and accompaniment parts (The Clock Of The Years (b. 44) and The Self-Unseeing (b. 47)). The absence of any accompaniment part is most effective in "Life Laughs Onward" (b. 24-5), especially after a five part, major-minor chord in second inversion. The words, "'Twas well", are sounded by the voice alone and an octave displacement between the two words provides further emphasis.

Example 35 Life Laughs Onward Bars 23 - 25

The musical score for Example 35, "Life Laughs Onward" bars 23-25, is presented in a standard format. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The vocal line begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic, followed by a forte (*f*) dynamic, and ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The lyrics are: "I saw that Old succumbed to Young:..... 'Twas well..... My". The piano accompaniment also features dynamic markings of *mp* and *p*. The score shows a clear transition in dynamics and articulation across the three bars.

As far as the distance between different pitches at any given moment is concerned, Finzi follows the sensible principle: the higher the pitches are placed, the more successful closed position chords are. Where there are exceptions to this rule, these are directly related to the meaning or atmosphere of the song. Such exceptions are found in "Channel Firing" (b. 1-9, 13-23, 52-59, 66-72 and 76-81).

### 9.1.2 Transparent textures

Considering the transparent textures first, there are a number of songs in which a single piano line reinforces the textual meaning or atmosphere. At the opening of "Shortening Days", the single line of the first ten beats suggests a thin whiff of smoke from the first fire to be lit after the summer. This very transparent texture which continues for the next ten beats as a two-part texture also enhances the emotional gloom which is the undercurrent of the first stanza of the poem. A single pitch in the prelude (b. 5) and postlude (b. 111) of "The Phantom" in each case preceded by the rider motif, has the effect of fixing the listener's attention on a single musical aspect, much as the protagonist in the poem intently stares at his own imagined creation: the "ghost-girl rider". The song, "To Lizbie Brown" ends on a single dominant pitch emphasizing the poet's sense of wistfulness and melancholy. The idea of a gently falling leaf is suggested by the single line opening of the

song, "The Too Short Time". A second leaf, on a slightly different route soon follows (b. 3 - two part texture), then a third (b. 6 - three part texture) and a fourth (b. 7) until a four-part texture prevails from the end of bar eight. In bar 19 of "He Abjures Love", a single line, ascending *arpeggiated* figure occurs with the word "pursuing", aptly reinforcing the text. In "Epeisodia" a single line scalar passage occurs twice (b. 6 and 50). Neither passage is specifically related to textual meaning or atmosphere but they both occur immediately prior to the introduction of the vocal part of stanzas 1 and 3. The function is therefore structural more than semantic. In all these examples (except the last one), the very transparent texture directly enhances the textual meaning.

A number of examples of a two-part texture which prevails to the benefit of the text or atmosphere is highlighted in this paragraph. The same two-part material occurs in the prelude (b. 1-4) to and postlude (b. 48) of "Budmouth Dears". The large distance between the parts, high dynamic level, spiky articulation and quick tempo, all in the company of a thin texture, anticipate the jollity and robustness in the song. The two-part, bi-tonal opening of the song, "The Comet At Yell'ham" has been discussed earlier (see example 4). In an otherwise three- and four-part accompaniment of the song, "The Dance Continued", the texture suddenly diminishes to two parts between bars 10 to 11. The reason lies in the uncertain and somewhat gloomy sentiments expressed in the text, "I did not know \ That hey-days fade and go". An extended two-part section occurs in "Summer Schemes" (b. 15-26). The adjacent text suggests the crisp and vigorous singing of innumerable birds and their *facile* flooding of the plain is suggested by the two-part texture. The low-pitched opening of "When I Set Out For Lyonesse" (b. 1-7) also has a two-part texture and the combination of these elements with a *pp* level achieves the *Misterioso* atmosphere suggested in bar 0<sup>4</sup>. In "Proud Songsters", two-part textures are limited to bars 5, 14 and 29. In the first two cases, the textures are related to bird-calls and the third anticipates the opening of stanza two. The effect and the function of the very active two-part section in "Before and After Summer" were fully discussed earlier (see example 7). The two-part opening of "The Market-Girl" (b. 1-3) creates an impression of her isolation and is sharply in contrast to the eight-part, final chord suggesting joy and fulfilment at the establishing of a relationship between the persona and the market-girl. A very short but interesting two-part section occurs in "I Look Into My Glass" in the second half of bar 11. The two Ds on either side of middle C are sounded twice before the vocal part enters – on the latter pitch – with the words, "But Time, to make me grieve". The sudden, transparent texture gives an impression of a clock-bell tolling, immediately anticipating the reference to time.

Example 36 I Look Into My Glass Bar 11 - 12

The musical score for Example 36, 'I Look Into My Glass' bars 11-12, consists of two systems. The top system is the vocal line in treble clef, with lyrics 'But Time, to make me grieve, Part'. The tempo is marked 'a tempo'. The bottom system is the piano accompaniment in bass clef. It features a piano part with dynamics 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'cresc.' (crescendo). The piano part is written in a two-part texture, with the right hand playing a melody and the left hand providing harmonic support. The lyrics are aligned with the vocal line.

As with the single pitch texture, these transparent two-part textures apart from allowing for clarity of the text, also enhance the textual meaning and underlying atmosphere of each song.

### 9.1.3 Dense textures

There is a tendency in the Hardy songs for dense piano textures to coincide with the vocal climax of the song. In bars nine to eleven of "Former Beauties", the text refers to the former splendour of the "market dames". Three climaxes occur, the most important being on the word, "vowed" (b. 10), in the larger context, "Are these the muslined pink young things to whom \ We vowed and swore". All three climaxes are supported by a warm six-part chords in the piano part. By contrast, the opening of the song has a bleak, dissonant two-to three-part texture when the middle-aged, tight-lipped market dames are described. The climax of "Channel Firing" on the words, "to avenge", was discussed in chapter eight. Three six-part chords are sounded at the vocal climax (see example 34). "Channel Firing" is one of the exceptional cases where the composer ventures into the extremely low register with three- to five-part chords. The reason for exploring this 'murky' texture option is twofold: An impression of the world beneath the grave is successfully created and the low-pitched rumble effectively sets the roaring of a distant "gunnery practice". The climax of the song, "Amabel" (b. 35) (see example 32) is also accompanied by six-part chords. In the song "Let Me Enjoy", the vocal climax occurs aptly but also ironically on the word, "glad" (b. 30). The poet expresses relief at not being admitted into Paradise which is contrary to what one normally expects. This climax is not only supported by a six-part chord but also by a *ff* dynamic level, strong accent and broadening of the tempo. In the song, "I Look Into My Glass", the invocation, "Would God it came to pass" is the vocal climax and is supported by a five-part chord in the accompaniment. The emotional climax, though not the highest pitch in "Life Laughs Onward", occurs close to the end of the song (b. 23-4) with the words, "I saw that Old succumb to Young". The word, "succumb", is accompanied by a six-part chord and the word, "Young", by a five-part chord (see example 35).

A second tendency involves the intensification of the texture towards the end of the song. Such a denser ending is mostly the result of a positive surge at the end of the poem or Finzi's turning it into a positive ending where Hardy leaves it open-ended. The most telling examples occur in "Budmouth Dears" (the soldiers' fervent hope that they may see the girls again with the implication that they will be alive to do so), "Shortening Days" (the glories of harvest and cider-making are extolled), "Transformations" (the transformation of the deceased into the vegetation is celebrated), "Rollicum-Rorum" (the soldier's jolly, nonsense-refrain is sounded with gusto), "Epeisodia" (the lovers' blessed rest is anticipated), "The Market-Girl" (the persona rejoices at the gaining of his 'prize'), "At A Lunar Eclipse" (the composer reinforces some of the feats of men despite the apparent insignificance of the earth in relation to the universe) and "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly" (the joyous intention of embarking on a worthwhile "pilgrimage") (see example 2). The texture intensifies as a result of the increased number of pitches which are used in the accompaniment and by the gradual widening of the distance between the right hand and left hand accompaniment material.

#### 9.1.4 Texture variation

In none of Finzi's strophic or varied strophic songs does the accompaniment stay exactly the same. One of his variation techniques is to amplify the texture of the piano part. Examples are found in, "The Sigh", "The Dance Continued" and "When I Set Out For Lyonesse". In the first, the fourth stanza is accompanied in a five part-texture, as supporting a brave attempt by the poet to reject the doubt and regret he feels when uttering words like, "I knew her thoroughly \ And she loved me staunchly, truly". In the second, the eighth stanza refers to carefree singing and "gipsying" which is immediately reflected in the five- and six-part texture. The very next stanza, following a short interlude refers to a lightly danced romance and the density decreases again to a three-part texture. In the third example "When I Set Out For Lyonesse", the second stanza has a considerably different setting from the first and third although the basic atmosphere is retained. The main difference is the five- and six-part piano texture, the link with the text being the words, "While I should sojourn there". A more static rhythmic movement and the thicker texture support the impression of a sojourn. It is clear from this discussion that the denser textures tends to be coupled with more positive circumstances in the text.

#### 9.1.5 Interesting textures

To conclude the reference to piano texture, a number of specific references to individual textural features are made. The song, "So I Have Fared" has a homophonic, chordal accompaniment. A five-part piano texture is present in almost half the song (49%) and is the dominant texture. The one significant deviation occurs in

bar 34 where a seven-part chord is used with the words, "any one's" (b. 34). This textural emphasis supports the rueful conclusion by the poet that his achievements were few and his influence minimal: "Sadly little grist I / Bring my mill, or any one's". In bar 16 of "The Clock Of The Years", there is a strong textural emphasis immediately following the word, "enough", in the accented (^) eight-part chord in the piano. The emotional utterance is coupled with a dense tonic chord in second inversion and the eight pitches are in closed position. In "Childhood Among The Ferns", the description of the glorious appearance of the sun (b. 54) is emphasized by a six-part chord. The poet's projected abundance of light is translated by Finzi into music by using an abundance of sound.

Three *arpeggiated*, six- or seven-part chords at a *pp* dynamic level in the song, "In A Churchyard", accompany the words, "Now set among the wise" (b. 46-7). These words are uttered by the deceased who consider themselves to be far better off than the living and express the hope that their rest will not be disturbed by a final trumpet. The gentle application of a denser texture is effective with these reassuring words. Another unorthodox use of a denser texture occurs with the words, "Childlike, I danced in a dream" (b. 34-40), in the song, "The Self-unseeing". One might well have expected a light, transparent texture. Finzi, however, achieves the 'lightness' by other means: the dynamic level is *pp*; *staccatos* and *half-staccatos* are used in the bass and the composer adds the indication *sempre delicato* and *il basso molto leggiero*. The success of the dense texture used in the bass part of the accompaniment in this case lies in the fact that the every second chord is displaced by an octave and that the treble clef material is more than an octave away. After immense emotional turmoil, the result of the rejection of romantic love in the song "He abjures Love", the end is comparatively docile. This is the result of a logical conclusion that there is nothing but death ("the Curtain") once one rejects love. This realization at the close of the song, is sympathetically accompanied by six-part chords at a *pp* level as though the composer agrees.

Example 37 He Abjures Love Bars 127 - 134

The musical score for Example 37, "He Abjures Love" (bars 127-134), features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef and includes the lyrics "And then, the Cur-tain.....". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked "Ritenuato". Dynamics include "p" and "pp". A "ten." marking is present in the piano part. The piece ends with a "Curtain" marking and a final chord.

## 9.2 The texture potential of the string quartet accompaniment

The texture potential of the string quartet as an instrument is limited by the same factors as the piano, namely the instrument's range and the number of pitches that sound together.

The range of the instrument has one important limitation which influences the composer's options: the lowest pitch limit of the 'cello is fixed two octaves below middle C. The upper limit of the first violin is roughly three octaves above middle C and can be further extended by the use of harmonics.

As far as density of pitches is concerned, double and triple stops are possible on all four instruments. These are, however, reserved for special effect and each instrument playing a single line is by far the most common practice. The distance between simultaneously sounding pitches again follows the principle: the higher the pitches, the closer together they are positioned.

As a result of the nature of a string quartet as an instrument, it is to be expected then, that a four-part texture would be the most common – which is the case in five of the six songs from the early cycle, *By Footpath and Stile*. It is, however, exactly the deviation from this obvious texture which makes the writing for the instruments interesting. In "The Master And The Leaves", 37% of the bars have a three-part texture against the 39% with a four-part texture. This emphasis on a more transparent texture is in keeping with the light, pastoral atmosphere retained in the song. The text suggests that the leaves ceaselessly attempt to attract the attention of their "Master" who apparently remains indifferent. The remaining texture types occur in specific places to enhance the atmosphere. Single pitches (1%) occur in bars 53 and 82 and a two-part texture (13%) in bars 0 to 9. The main melodic motif (first violin) is announced against a descending, five-note *ostinato* figure (viola). The light atmosphere suggested by this transparent texture is further reinforced by the indication *Presto giocoso* = c.126 or faster and the *staccato* (viola) and *half-staccato* (first violin) indications. A five-part texture occurs in bars 63 to 77 (10%). The adjacent text refers to the "nightjar's" singing and the low-pitched denser texture suggests an impression of night time. To single out the merits of texture variation in this song is not to deny certain gains, as far as texture is concerned, in the other five songs.

### 9.2.1 Transparent textures

In the song "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard", there are five bars of silence in the string parts: the first three of these (bars 127 - 129, one of which is a general pause) precede the opening of stanza 6 which tells the story of Squire Audeley Gray. This dramatic pause is in sympathy with the Squire's former isolation and scornful attitude to life. In bar 173, a general pause precedes the final stanza and serves as a moment of orientation for the listener so that the poet's words in the 'real' world can be comprehended

immediately. Bar 194, the final bar of the song, is an interesting specification of general silence, especially considering that there would be silence anyway. This empty bar serves to show that the preceding motif is interrupted after only four notes have sounded, much as human existence is interrupted by death, often without warning. There are also a number of bars in which only a single instrumental line (b. 1-2, 13-4, 39-45, 60 and 108) is used. The viola part presents the "Sir or Madam" motif as the single part opening to the song whereby the listener is invited to join in the stroll through the country churchyard. Other bars containing a single part are associated with isolation. The most significant of these (b. 39-45) is a solo 'cello line which has already been discussed (see example 9).

In "Where The Picnic Was", a single-part texture is present in the prelude (b. 1-6) and postlude (b. 55-63) and sets the poet's isolation from his loved ones. As the poem progresses it becomes clear that the poet revisits a spot where he, his beloved and some friends had a picnic the previous summer but that he has lost, in the interim, the people close to him: the friends have left to reside in the city and his beloved has died.

In the song "The Oxen", the transparent two-part accompaniment which occurs between bars 5 to 7 coincides with the opening of the vocal part and has the purpose of highlighting the text so that the initial statement is clear: "Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock". The four final bars sound a single E in the 'cello part bring the song to a very quiet close and show the fragility of human hope in time of war. Hardy wrote the poem after the outbreak of the First World War. It was an experiment with hope – against all odds – during the Advent of 1915. Finzi sets the poem in 1921-2 within three or four years after the end of the War, clearly in empathy with the sentiments expressed: the innocent hope of childhood is preferred to the cynical doubt of adulthood.

Example 38 The Oxen Bars 40 - 46

The musical score for Example 38, "The Oxen" bars 40-46, is presented on five staves. The top staff is the vocal line, beginning with a circled '4' above the first measure. The lyrics "I should go with him in the gloom, - Hop-ing it might be - so." are written below the vocal line. The four staves below are instrumental accompaniment, featuring a two-part texture in the upper staves and a single E note in the lower staves.

## 9.2.2 Denser textures

Denser textures in a string quartet context are minimized to the use of double and triple stops on any of the individual instruments. There are few examples of this in the six songs. The two bars with five- and six-part textures in "Where The Picnic Was" (b. 44 and 45) occur at the secondary climax on the text "wandered far \ From this grassy rise". Both first and second violin employ double stops to create the thicker texture which serves to emphasize especially the word, "rise". A five-part texture in "The Oxen" (b. 32) does not last for an entire bar but it is significant that this texture occurs on chord vii<sup>06</sup>, with the word, "Come" which is the emotional climax of the song within the context, "Come; see the oxen kneel". The denser textures in "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard" are reserved for the climactic moments in the song (b. 78 - 83, 87, 90, 97-8, 101-2 and 161). The most significant are the double stops on the 'cello and second violin in bars 79 and 80, during which Thomas Voss' transformation into the berries of a yew tree is exalted. The second significant increase of the texture occurs in the 'cello part from bar 181 to bar 187 as part of the "murmurous" atmosphere created by the *ostinato* figure. This supports the textual reference to the "radiant hum" of insects in the church garden. The final example of a texture type denser than four parts is to be found in the opening (b. 1-5) and closing (b. 79-83) of "Exeunt Omnes". This static five-part texture -- in the high register -- supports the feeling of isolation suggested by the text, "Everybody else then, going, \ And I still left where the fair was?". The absence of a 'cello part, the triad without a third and the second inversion placing leaves the chord suspended in mid-air, isolated and unresolved. The textual meaning and atmosphere is enhanced by a combination of elements, the texture being the most important.

### Example 39 Exeunt Omnes Bars 1 - 5

Allegro moderato,  $\text{♩} = \text{c.}100$   
*Freely*

Eve-ry-bo-dy else, then, go-ing, And I still left where the fair was?...

### 9.3 Small Orchestra Texture

Of the single Hardy song with an orchestral texture for the accompaniment, Stephen Banfield, in *Sensibility and the English Song* (1985), says:

The one other Hardy setting from Finzi's earliest period is 'Only a man harrowing clods' ('In the time of "the breaking of the nations"'), for baritone and small orchestra, composed in 1923 and not published. It subsequently became the third movement of the four-movement *Requiem da Camera* (1924) for choir, four soloists and orchestra written in memory of Finzi's composition teacher, Ernest Farrar [who died in France in 1918]. The most notable passage is the instrumental introduction, which also appears in the prelude to the *Requiem*, and in which Finzi's characteristic march of time is present as a throbbing bass, but....the song as a whole is uncommunicative." (1985:290)

The present writer did not deem it fair to examine critically an orchestral score which the composer had not completed in his own hand, even if a incomplete pencil sketch was available. This does not, in any way, deny the obvious value of the completion of the a score, as realised by Philip Thomas in the 1980s. To make a statement, however, about the orchestral texture on the strength of a single, incomplete orchestration would not be appropriate.

### 9.4 Summary

The accompaniment textures consist largely of three and four parts. All deviations from this procedure are directly related to the textual meaning or the atmosphere of the song (or both): more transparent textures carry connotations of sparseness, fragility and isolation while denser textures accompany the climaxes and dramatic moments in the songs. Varying the texture is one of the ways in which the composer achieves structural variation, especially in strophic and varied strophic songs. While these characteristics are mostly apparent from the piano accompaniments, the same are embryonically present, in the early works with a string quartet accompaniment.

## CHAPTER 10

### Structure

In this chapter the outline or architecture of the Hardy songs will be considered. In all vocal music the text plays a significant role in shaping the musical form and these Finzi settings are no exception. In fact, the musical construction follows the text particularly closely. Stephen Banfield says (quoted from *Sensibility and English Song* (1985)):

The architectural basis of Finzi's Hardy settings are difficult to define. For Hardy very seldom uses the same metrical pattern twice and Finzi rarely duplicates a form. The longer songs tend to avoid sectional repetition and become *arioso* scenes whose sections are differentiated by varying rates of movement and figuration, with or without motivic cross-reference between them....Straightforward strophic form is most uncommon....[and] there is no wholesale strophic repetition....Most of the short two-stanza poems which he sets are composed to sound like a single musical paragraph with a caesura in the middle. (1985:287)

There is, despite the non-conformity, a number of structural tendencies: unitary, binary, ternary, rondo-like or ritornello structures and a number of 'chain' or episodic structures with internal cross-references. The through-composed procedure as far as the vocal part is concerned, is used in many cases. Even where earlier piano sections return, the vocal part is often different or varied in order to accommodate the text.

Before citing examples of standard structures and the deviations from these, a brief comment on Finzi's use of preludes, interludes and postludes is called for.

#### 10.1 Preludes, Interludes and Postludes

There are two songs that have no prelude at all (So I Have Fared and Two Lips). The stark, penetrating simplicity of "So I have Fared" and the chant-like characteristics make a prelude and postlude redundant. At the end of the ten bar *arioso* (b. 27-36), only two bars occur during which the voice is silent. This silence is the result of the text, "*Domine Tu scisti!*" (Lord, You know all) – the composer allows the performer (and listener) a moment to recover.

"Two Lips" is the only Hardy song which starts with voice alone, even if just with the upbeat. This short song (24 bars in total) also has a link (b. 15) and miniature 'postlude' (b. 24). The brevity of the cycle of love and life is emphasized by the almost relentless movement, pausing only to pay homage to the deceased.

### 10.1.1 Preludes

Six songs have a prelude of one bar or less (Exeunt Omnes (one bar), I Say I'll Seek Her (one quaver), Shortening Days (two beats), The Dance Continued (two beats), The Clock Of The Years (two beats) and He Abjures Love (one bar)). Of the short preludes, three are dramatic explosions: the accented *ff* quaver which is the ecstatic opening to "I Say I'll Seek Her", the seven-note, hair-raising scale of "The Clock Of The Years" and the anticipated, thundering anger of the opening of "He Abjures Love". The other three are short contemplative openings: the suspended, hollow second inversion chord of "Exeunt Omnes", the listless whiff of smoke in "Shortening Days" and the hesitant, subdominant first inversion (d minor) which opens "The Dance Continued".

At least seven of the Hardy songs have a long prelude: three early songs, "Paying Calls" (53 bars), "The Master And The Leaves" (12 bars) and "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard" (14 bars) and four later songs, "The Phantom" (12 bars), "Proud Songsters" (15 bars), "The Self-Unseeing" (10 bars) and "The Market-Girl" (10 bars). The extremely long prelude to "Paying Calls" is an attempt at setting the mood of the cycle – the isolation of the individual – but is only marginally successful. Two longish preludes in later songs can be regarded as much more successful than that of "Paying Calls" largely because they are substantially shorter and contain healthier musical material. A long prelude occurs in "The Phantom". The purpose is to establish firmly the rider motif and to anticipate its cyclic recurrence in the rest of the song. Stephen Banfield says the following about the prelude to "Proud Songsters" (quoted from *Sensibility and English Song*):

It [Proud Songsters] begins in....B minor, and has a long deeply affective introduction [with] yearning appoggiaturas over a syncopated pulse....Gradually, however, as the voice enters....the piano accompaniment gathers a more optimistic harmonic momentum: The endless cycle of life is beginning again and will continue. (1985: 291-2)

Example 40 Proud Songsters Bars 1 - 15

Andante ♩ = c. 69

VOICE

PIANO

*p legato*

Ritard. . . . . A tempo

*mp* *mp* *p* *mp*

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece, likely a prelude. It is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows a piano introduction with a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking and a *pp* (pianissimo) marking. The second system shows the beginning of a vocal line with the word "The" and a *p* (piano) marking, followed by a *sempre legato* instruction for the piano accompaniment.

Irrespective of the length, it is clear that the composer employs the prelude to capture the atmosphere of the song.

### 10.1.2 Interludes

Interludes tend to be shorter than the preludes. One of the longer examples (11 bars) in the early song "The Master And The Leaves", introduces the final stanza in which the "Master" eventually speaks. The long interlude emphasizes the Master's reluctance and hesitation to speak and, when he does, one understands why: the reasons for his apparent indifference are inexplicable, painful to himself and lost on his audience. Another interlude of the same length occurs in "Before And After Summer". Hardy's picturesque descriptions of nature are hardly more vividly displayed than in these two stanzas. The first curses the discomforts of winter while the second bemoans the miseries of autumn. Spring and summer are mentioned only in dazed astonishment at their quick departure. Finzi's interlude occurs where the latter two seasons would have been but no musical mention of these joyous seasons is made. Winter dissolves into autumn on a dominant ninth, in third inversion (b minor).

Three additional interludes will be mentioned. The first is in the song, "In The Mind's Eye", where an

interlude of 10 bars occurs between the third stanza and final stanza. Musical material in the first three stanzas is erratic, portraying the emotional turmoil of the narrator who is separated from his beloved and has to rely on his "mind's eye" (memory) to picture her. The first five bars of the interlude summarize this turmoil through the use of a minor key and a string of accented *appoggiaturas* and suspensions while in the next five bars the turmoil is seen to subside slowly in favour of the 'sweet' memory of the beloved.

The second example occurs in "Epeisodia". Of the three stanzas of the poem, the outer two are pastorally inclined while the middle one ominously warns against the mechanical drudgery of urban living. It is between stanzas two and three that the ten-bar interlude occurs. The material of the interlude recalls that of the prelude but leans rather too heavily on the seven-note, scalar link of bar 6. The composer's problem seems to arise from placing the recapitulation of the piano accompaniment for the third stanza, an octave higher. This is a sensible move given the lofty text but the three-octave journey (from the D below middle C (b. 45) to the third D above middle C (b. 50 and 51)) of interrupted scalar passages is neither convincing nor functional.

The third example which will merely be mentioned, the detail having been discussed before, is the *Quasi cadenza* section (b. 50) in "I Said To Love" which is reminiscent of double octave machine-gun fire and which lasts for two systems (see example 6).

A number of the shorter songs contain small interludes (Let Me Enjoy, The Market-Girl, I Look Into My Glass, It Never Looks Like Summer, Two Lips and In Five-Score Summers). The song, "Let Me Enjoy", has three short links: a break consisting of a number of beats rather than a full bar separates the four stanzas. The prelude and postlude are equally brief. The let-us-get-on-with-it approach (*Andante ma con moto*) can be linked to the undertone of tentative dejection in the poem. A lexical set from the poem will bear testimony: "no less, other aims, flits, not a word, ignoring air, not meant for mine, if such should be, no place for me". Finzi judged, rightly, that these "other aims than my delight" should not be dwelt on for longer than is necessary.

### 10.1.3 Postludes

There is a large number of songs which have a single bar as postlude or no postlude at all and only five songs have one longer than a bar (The Master And The Leaves, Exeunt Omnes, Only A Man Harrowing Clods, The Comet At Yell'ham and In A Churchyard). Of the five, three are early songs and the longest consists of 18

bars and concludes *By Footpath and Stile* with more or less the same material with which the cycle opens. The cycle has now come full circle but, even so, the long-drawn-out final chord does not convince nor does the length of the postlude serve any particular purpose. Of the two later songs, the 36 beat (roughly nine bars) postlude of "The Comet At Yell'ham" is the more significant. The purpose was fully discussed in chapter four (see example 4).

The second postlude also nine bars long, occurs in the song, "In A Churchyard". The material, in slightly varied form refers to the prelude which sets a macabre scene in which the yew-tree recounts information that its roots gather from the dead buried in the churchyard. The message itself is not unsettling. The dead in their new state, consider themselves to be better off than the living. They are at ease and would choose to remain at rest rather than to be disturbed by a final trumpet. The final stanza suggests that Hardy accepts this view and Finzi agrees by setting it in a mellow D major. The recurrence of the sombre opening material in a nine-bar postlude seems somewhat curious. As to the reason for this one can but speculate: on a structural level the song is rounded off neatly into ternary form. Finzi may have meant to suggest that the poet's recent change of view though attractive, is simplistic or that living people can hardly be expected to accept it. Alternatively, the postlude may simply indicate that after the sun has finally disappeared, the graveyard returns to its nightly gloom. (The postlude reminds one of the setting of "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard" on a similar theme in which life in the churchyard is summarized in a little refrain: "All day cheerily \ All night eerily".)

There are five songs with no postlude whatsoever (*A Young Man's Exhortation*, *So I Have Fared, Before And After Summer*, *The Too Short Time* and *Epeisodia*). In another four songs the vocal part sustains the final pitch over the short postlude (*Shortening Days*, *Transformations*, *Rollicum-Rorum* and *For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly*). Yet another four songs have a single bar 'postlude' (*The Sigh*, *The Clock Of The Years*, *Overlooking The River* and *Two Lips*). The abrupt end of the song "The Too Short Time", is appropriate and effective: there would be no reason to add a postlude to the words, "And yet [she did] the best \ She could within the too short time \ Granted her prime." The final D in the vocal part of "Rollicum-Rorum" is prolonged for seven-and-a-half beats (almost four bars) while the piano vigorously completes the song (see example 33). The single bar 'postlude' of "The Sigh" is a natural ending – a repetition of the opening sighing motif except that the final tonic chord is added with the bass falling to the second E flat below middle C. This final low pitch signifies the end of that particular sigh for the persona, and of all other sighing as well.

## 10.2 Formal Structures

### 10.2.1 Unitary form

A song is deemed to have a unitary structure where the material used throughout is largely uniform. There are two types of songs in this category. The first comprises the short songs usually settings of two-stanza poems (It Never Looks Like Summer Here, Two Lips and I Need Not Go). A small break occurs between the stanzas but there is a single thought running through the poem. Unity is achieved by subtle cross-reference between the vocal and piano parts as short imitations. These cross-references in "I Need Not Go" will serve as an example:

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Voice b. 7 <sup>1</sup> -8 <sup>1</sup>   | - | Piano b. 8 <sup>1</sup> -9 <sup>1</sup> |
| Voice b. 15 <sup>1-2</sup>                | - | Piano 15 <sup>3</sup>                   |
| Piano b. 23 <sup>1-2</sup>                | - | Voice b. 24-25 <sup>1</sup>             |
| Voice b. 28 <sup>2</sup> -29 <sup>1</sup> | - | Piano b. 29 <sup>1-2</sup>              |
| Piano b. 33 <sup>3</sup>                  | - | Voice b. 34 <sup>2</sup>                |

The second type of unitary song comprises what one might call the 'strophic' ones. As has been pointed out before, none of these songs is simply strophic. Even where the vocal line is largely so the accompaniment is always varied. (Budmouth Dears, Rollicum-Rorum and To Lizbie Brown). "Rollicum-Rorum" is the most 'strophic' vocally with a tightly-knit varied accompaniment. "Budmouth Dears" comes closest to being in ternary form, the third stanza (B section) referring to the soldiers away at the front. The two references per stanza to the name, "Lizbie Brown", act as a varied refrain in the song (see example 18). The tight control of musical material, single chromatic note and evenness of mood renders a good example of a fairly extended song (66 bars) in unitary form (although strophic, at the same time).

The musical structure of "The Sigh" defies rigid categorization but certainly has a strophic inclination and is therefore discussed here. The difficulty in labelling its formal structure is created by the fact that the accompaniment to the different stanzas is more than mere variation. Finzi follows the emotional undercurrent of the text closely and this results in substantially different accompaniments. The final stanza, "It was in our May, remember" (b. 31), modulates to E major abruptly (a minor third lower than the original) and the rhythmic material is more hesitant. This final stanza serves as a kind of coda in which all the regret and doubt is sensitively summarized.

### 10.2.2 Binary form

Longer two-stanza poems and others with clear division of thought are set with a binary or near binary structure. (Shortening Days, The Self-Unseeing, Overlooking The River, The Two Short Time and At Middle-Field Gate In February). In "Shortening Days", the binary structure follows the formal and semantic structure of the text exactly: stanza one deals with the first unpleasant signs of winter (*senza misura*) and stanza two with pleasant aspects of autumn and the musical material contrasts sharply (*con moto maestoso*).

The musical structure of "The Self-unseeing" does not follow the three-stanza text structure but rather the semantic structure: stanza one sets a sombre scene in which the narrator recalls an impression of his childhood abode; stanzas two and three (*un poco più mosso; grazioso*) comprise the slightly longer second section of the song. The setting of the final line of the poem, "Yet we were looking away" – rather obscure in meaning – follows after a single bar of silence (b. 47) and, with the foreboding postlude serves as a coda which is only vaguely reminiscent of the opening (*Tempo I*).

### 10.2.3 Ternary form

Ternary musical structures occur frequently (Paying Calls, The Oxen, The Comet At Yell'ham, Transformations, When I Set Out For Lyonesse, Waiting Both, In The Mind's Eye, Epeisodia and Let Me Enjoy). Poems with a three-stanza formal structure are the most obvious ternary constructions. "Epeisodia" is a splendid example. Stanzas one and three have a pastoral inclination and are treated musically in a similar way. The middle stanza referring to stressful urban existence is set with completely different material to enhance the more dramatic text.

The text of "Let Me Enjoy" consists of four stanzas but the middle two deal with the narrator's experience of unrequited love and are set with noticeably more active material to enhance the emotional turmoil. The first and fourth stanzas are more contemplative and are set with less active material.

### 10.2.4 Rondo form

A number of songs has rondo-like musical structures or contains short sections which act as *ritornellos* that re-occur at intervals (Where The Picnic Was, The Master And The Leaves, Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard, Ditty, Channel Firing, Before And After Summer and Amabel). The song, "The Master And The Leaves", has a typical rondo treatment. The structure is represented in the following table:

|           | Prel.  | Stan 1  | Interl | Stan 2    | Interl  | Stan 3 | Lk     | Stan 3 | Interl | Stan 4 | Postl  |
|-----------|--------|---------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Line      |        | 1-6     |        | 7-12      |         | 13-17  |        | 18     |        | 19-14  |        |
| Bars      | 1-12   | 13-34   | 35-40  | 41-77     | 78-86   | 87-102 | 103-4  | 105-8  | 109-19 | 120-40 | 141-56 |
| No.       | 12     | 22      | 6      | 37        | 9       | 16     | 2      | 4      | 11     | 21     | 16     |
| Phrases   | 6+6    | 6+7+5+4 | 6      | 10+10+8+9 | 9       | 8+8    | 2      | 4      | 4+7    | 9+5+7  | 7+9    |
| Structure | A----- | B-----  |        |           | A'----- |        | C----- |        |        | A----- |        |

The rondo motif is prominent in all the A-sections and gradually disintegrates in the final section. The other sections carefully follow the atmosphere suggested in the text. The B-section has a bolder, more insistent character while the C-section is characterized by a more contemplative atmosphere during which the Master gives his painful answer.

The best example of the use of a *ritornello* – as Banfield points out (1985:287) – is in the song "Channel Firing" where the gunfire motif acts as the *ritornello* and not only provides structural cohesion but also creates the impression of periodic firing during the battle manoeuvres somewhere in the not too distant English Channel.

#### 10.2.5 Episodic form

'Chain' forms or episodic structures are present in many songs (Banfield refers to some of these as *arioso scenas* (1985:287)) and these exhibit two tendencies. There is a number of settings which follow the developing text carefully but at the end of the song have a brief reference to earlier material (The Phantom, The Clock Of The Years, In A Churchyard, I Look Into My Glass, At A Lunar Eclipse and Life Laughs Onward). Others are more purely episodic with no reference to earlier material; they achieve cohesion by internal cross-reference between voice and piano (Exeunt Omnes, I Say I'll Seek Her, In Years Defaced and The Market-Girl). In most of the songs of both these types the vocal part follows the through-composed procedure; that is to say, there is little or no reference to earlier melodic patterns.

Of the first group, "The Clock Of The Years" is the best example. The dramatically unfolding ghost-story has three broad sections and then a very brief reference to the opening. The different sections can be summarized as follows:

|                      |  |                   |
|----------------------|--|-------------------|
| A-section (b. 1-8)   | A dramatic <i>recitativo secco</i>                 | Stanza 1          |
| B-section (b. 9-44)  | A <i>recitativo stromentato</i> filled with pathos | Stanzas 2 and 3   |
| C-section (b. 45-56) | A brief <i>asioso</i> lament                       | Stanza 4 (l. 1-3) |
| A-Section (b. 57-65) | A dramatic <i>recitativo secco</i>                 | Stanza 4 (l. 3-6) |

In the song "I Look Into My Glass", the reference in the postlude to material in the prelude is rhythmically extremely subtle. The 'throbbing' syncopated rhythmic motif which illustrates most obviously the last line of the text, "throbbings of noontide" (b. 15), is slipped into the opening bars (b. 1-2) long before the listener has any idea to what it refers. All the other brief phrases of the song follow an episodic procedure.

The song with a stricter 'chain-form', "I Say I'll Seek Her", is a prime example. In the A-section (b. 1-6<sup>2</sup>), an ecstatic opening quickly gives way to uncertainty. The B-section (b. 6<sup>3</sup>-21) deals alternatively with hope and despair while the C-section (b. 22-38) deals with inconsolable disillusionment: "And I am waiting, waiting; \ But O, you tarry still". The most significant music-structural feature in the song is the systematic reduction of rhythmic activity as the beloved's heart sinks lower and lower.

"The Market-Girl" is another song with an episodic structure. After a fairly long prelude (b. 1-10) which introduces the main cohesive melodic motif (b. 3), the A-section (*quasi recit.* b. 11-21) follows. In the B-section (*più cantando* b. 22-35), the narrator makes tentative contact with the "market-girl" and the C-section (b. 36-47) is the jubilant conclusion.

#### 10.2.6 Non-standard structures

As a final comment on Finzi's architectural constructions, a few observations are made about songs that resist standard categorization. The structure of the song "A Young Man's Exhortation", can be represented by the following table:

|           | Prel.  | Stan 1 | Stan 2 | Lk | Stan 3               | Stan 4 | Lk | Stan 5       |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|----|----------------------|--------|----|--------------|
| Line      |        | 1-4    | 5-8    |    | 9-12                 | 13-16  |    | 17-20        |
| Bars      | 1      | 2-7    | 7-11   | 11 | 12-17                | 18-24  | 25 | 26(extended) |
| No.       | 1      | 6      | 4      |    | 6                    | 7      | 1  | 1(extended)  |
| Phrases   |        | 2+4    | 3+1    |    | 4+2                  | 4+3    | 1  | 3 segments   |
| Structure | a----- | b----- |        |    | a <sup>1</sup> ----- | c----- |    | d-----       |

The five stanzas of this poem are clearly divided into two sections. The first three stanzas contain positive

advice: "Call off your eyes from care", "Exalt and crown the hour" and "Send up such touching strains". These three are treated in a ternary way, the middle stanza being slightly more intense than the other. The remaining stanzas are treated differently, both from the opening ones and from one another. The text exhibits a youthful 'realistic pessimism' (Hardy wrote the poem in the 1920s from a note dating back to 1867). The final stanza has an almost listless, unmetred setting. The structure of the song can be seen to contain both ternary and binary characteristics.

The troublesome ten short stanzas of the poem "Regret Not Me", were dealt with in a characteristically novel way in the song entitled "The Dance Continued". The ten stanzas are set as follows:

a      b      c      d      e      c      f      g      c'<sup>1</sup>      a

The song has an episodic structure or 'chain-form' with the occasional irregular reference to the material of an earlier stanza, almost as a kind of refrain at odd intervals. The first and last stanzas are, furthermore, virtually identical – a strong cohesive factor in the song. There are in the song's structure, elements of many standard form types: there is a ternary element, the first stanza recurring at the end; there is a rondo element, the third stanza re-appearing; there is a through-composed element with so many stanzas set differently. The result is an interesting musical form through which the ceaseless, cyclic nature of life can be perceived as a backdrop to a text expressing ongoing, varied existence.

### 10.3 Summary

Preludes, interludes and postludes have a functional role whenever these occur: setting the atmosphere, changing the mood and contemplating the outcome of the poem. A number of standard form types are used (unitary, binary, ternary, rondo and episodic forms) but Finzi also creates his own non-standard formal constructions in which the text is followed closely. The longer poems are examples of Finzi's original handling of the formal construction. The structure of the song is often carried by the accompaniment while the voice follows a through-composed procedure.

## CHAPTER 11

### Mood and atmosphere

The discussion of the mood or atmosphere is one of the most important issues in this study. The composer's reaction to the text, his interpretation of its meaning and the act of putting it down on paper have but one true focus: to capture as closely as possible the atmosphere created by the words. One of the central conclusions of this study is that Finzi's sensitivity to the mood of Hardy's poems is one of his cardinal strengths in the art of song writing. The categories created in chapter three to accommodate the thematic aspects of the poems will be modified only slightly to classify the songs into categories of different moods.

#### 11.1 Moods concerning love

Songs about love preponderate but the moods vary considerably from defiant rejection to jubilant excitement. "He Abjures Love" and "I Said To Love" are both songs in which sentimental, romantic love is rejected in the most virulent terms. In the former, the rejection is tempered at the end of the song by the sobering conclusion that, after love has been dismissed, nothing remains but death, the final Curtain. A quieter chordal accompaniment creates a more rational atmosphere in contrast to the earlier passionate outburst. The latter song which is Finzi's last setting of a Hardy poem completed a few weeks before his death is unyielding in its rejection of romantic love, even to the point of the extermination of the human race, with a motif in the bass of bar 68, denoting nothing but scorn and marked *fff violento*. The *Quasi cadenza* section, marked *ff deliberato, pesante* (b. 50), must be mentioned again (see example 6) as it is the most effective rendering of defiance and despair in Finzi's entire output of songs.

Another song in which a negative aspect of love is portrayed deals with the deliberate withdrawal of the lover from his beloved. This is found in the song, "I Say I'll Seek Her" where the atmosphere gradually deteriorates from exuberant ecstasy to despondent disillusionment. Two songs end with the stinging mention of the beloved's death: "It Never Looks Like Summer Here" and "Two Lips". In the former, the dreariness of the weather at Beeny Cliff on the Cornish coast symbolizes the dismal life without the beloved. A strong sense of longing is suggested by the numerous ascending sixth intervals which occur in the song. The latter song starts out in light-hearted vein mentioning the various places in and circumstances under which the beloved has been kissed, including finally and tragically in a shroud. The atmosphere suddenly becomes sombre with an undertone of regret suggested by the Neapolitan chord in second inversion in the fourth last bar.

Regret for lost opportunities and partially fulfilled love is the sensitive atmosphere of the next group of love-songs: "The Sigh", "To Lizbie Brown" and "Amabel". The atmosphere created in "The Sigh", hovers between the poet's acceptance of the painful reality of his beloved's sighing at the first kiss and regret about not knowing or understanding why she sighed. The ambivalence of wanting not to doubt, yet doubting the

beloved's sincerity is the burden captured in the song with fluctuating rhythmic activity and tempo inflections. In "To Lizbie Brown", a lost opportunity for love through the poet's own hesitation is stoically related. The gentle lull between E flat major and c minor without any real modulation except perhaps once (b. 48), creates an introspective, more accepted kind of regret. Of the three songs the setting of "Amabel" comes closest to displaying bitterness, an emotion wholly absent in the other two. The severing of the relationship between the poet and "Amabel" seems to have been by mutual agreement but the poet is nevertheless caustic about the pitiful state in which he encounters her. Pity, anger, guilt and bitterness are the complicated emotions with which the composer had to deal here. The repeated pitches in the recurring motif accompanying the name create a sense of insistence while the outburst in the final stanza reveals the poet's true feelings, a mixture of bitterness, guilt, anger and pity which have been carefully restrained up to that point.

Two of the love-songs, "Ditty" and "Her Temple", have a casual, almost neutral atmosphere. In the former, the poet exalts the place "where she dwells", rather than the beloved. (Seymour-Smith, Hardy's most recent biographer, says that the poem has a "rather dutiful air" (1994:112)). The consistent use of stepwise movement and deliberately unchromatic setting (a single chromatic note on the word, "smart" (b.42)) creates an atmosphere of reposeful resignation. In the latter song, "Her Temple", the beloved is enshrined in the poem – therefore also in the song – but an element of guilt overshadows the final section of the song in which the poet foresees the future oblivion of his fame. The rather plaintive setting in E flat major of the first 14 bars gradually dissolves into an almost sombre f minor in which it remains to the end (b. 19).

Example 41 Her Temple Bars 14 - 19

The musical score for "Her Temple" (bars 14-19) is presented in two systems. The first system covers bars 14-18, and the second system covers bars 19-19. The key signature is E-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line is written in a soprano clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are: "told, 'O, so sweet was her fame, — That a man heaped this splen-dour up - on her; — None now knows his name?". The score includes performance markings such as "poco ritardando", "mp", "pp", and "rit.". The piano accompaniment features a recurring motif of repeated pitches, creating a sense of insistence.

The song "I Need Not Go" is in a certain sense unique among the love songs. The mood is moderately light-hearted throughout and the predominant key of E major supports this mood. The sense of resignation experienced by the poet as a result of his inability to commit himself to a definite return to his beloved is a sensitive and challenging atmosphere to capture. Finzi achieves this non-committal atmosphere largely through avoidance of the dominant chord, accentuation of the subdominant and use of a single chromatic note at the very end of the song. The mood of the song "In Years Defaced", has two aspects: the tragi-dramatic exposition of the lovers' unhappy circumstances in the first stanza which returns sporadically and the more sympathetic pastoral mood which characterizes most of the second and third stanzas. This pastoral mood has a sense of empathy towards the lovers and the climax of the song is the "faery's" homage to the lovers' unending love: "O not again \ Till Earth outwears \ Shall love like theirs \ Suffuse this glen!"

There are only four love-songs with an obviously positive outcome: "In The Mind's Eye, The Market-Girl", "When I Set Out For Lyonesse" and "Budmouth Dears". The atmosphere of the song "In The Mind's Eye" is passionate (b. 1 *Allegro con passione*) and marginally dramatic. Every emotion (regret, excitement, longing) is carefully restrained, particularly by the knowledge that the vision is still not the reality. There is a constant ebb and flow of emotion – a procedure which is supported by several music elements (rhythmic activity, harmonic language, dynamic levels, textural density) – but in the last stanza it gives way to an almost lamentable tenderness. The lexical set in the text, "Sweet, shy, Dear, Who can say nay, Never, Dear", enhances the longing that radiates from these words and is matched in the setting with tonal harmony, a slower tempo, a long pedalpoint on the dominant, a consistent four-part texture and less active rhythmic material. In "The Market-Girl", after a patiently slow development, the accompaniment explodes into jubilation at the poet achieving a love-prize. A summary of the developing atmosphere is provided:

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Prelude:<br>(b. 1-10)  | A bleak, almost pathetic mood is set which portrays the market girl's loneliness and disillusionment.          |
| Stanza 1<br>(b. 11-25) | The poet's sympathetic, slightly condescending attitude is presented.  |
| Stanza 2<br>(b. 26-47) | A greater sense of interest and suppressed excitement initially makes way for exuberance in the final moments. |

The atmosphere is treated as an organic entity: it grows with the narrative and emotional undercurrent of the text.

The poem, "When I set out for Lyonesse" has a fairly consistent atmosphere throughout. An event is anticipated with trepidation, expectation and excitement; the exact nature of the event cannot be surmised,

rendering it mysterious and thrilling; the poet returns home after the event, no more than hinting what it was but radiating a sense of secretive accomplishment. There is a slight variation in the mood of the second stanza which is rhythmically slower, texturally denser and in a major key. These coincide with the musing tone in the text and the reference to the sojourn in Lyonesse. The other two stanzas are rhythmically active and metrically marked, have a relatively transparent texture and are mostly in e minor. All these elements join to portray the mysterious circumstances, the excitation and the mixture of intrepidity and diffidence on the part of the poet.

In the most animated and youthful love-song "Budmouth Dears", the mood remains largely consistent throughout because of the unaltered tempo. The song has a very strong forward drive, carefully capturing the soldiers' marching. The rough chordal texture and use of *staccatos* create a sense of excitement, exhilaration and anticipation and create the impression that the soldiers are marching on loose gravel. There is also a slightly ominous mood in bars 24-35 (the third stanza) prior to and with the text, "Do they miss us much, I Wonder?", when the soldiers are at the front. The stimulating prospect of meeting these beauties again saves the song (and the poem) from a gloomy conclusion.

Such then, are the 'love-songs'. Poems dealing with the less attractive aspects of love (scorn, withdrawal, regret, indifference, loss etc.) are chosen for setting by Finzi more often than poems dealing fulfilment and happiness. This realization conjures up a question: why would Finzi who enjoyed such a fulfilled married life, return so many times and occasionally with such vehemence to the topic of love-gone-wrong? The answer is two-fold. Firstly, Finzi's "kinship...with his [Hardy's] mental make-up" (Gerald in a letter to Joy Finzi, 25 October 1938) prompted him to take more careful note of the suffering and pain that fills the world and, secondly, these less attractive emotions are more challenging to set and allow for greater artistic exploration of human emotion.

## 11.2 Pastoral moods

There is also strong inclination towards pastoral or seasonal themes and the typical atmospheres which accompany them. The first group of four songs is the more purely pastoral without significantly relating to or contrasting with a human element: "Shortening Days", "Proud Songsters", "Before And After Summer" and "The Too Short Time". The atmosphere created in "Shortening Days" is divided into two sections. In the A-section, the poet's dreading the advent of winter is set to music using a transparent texture, natural minor key and *parlando* singing style to accompany the images of a smouldering fire and nature's dissatisfaction with the approach of winter. In the B-section, the poet's rejoices in the glories of autumn and this is set with a dense texture, major key, a more *cantando* singing style and the metrically steady movement which accompanies the appearance of the cider-maker with all his equipment. Gloom is conquered by joy.

The piano accompaniment of "Proud Songsters" largely carries the mood of the song: it is pastoral but melancholic with bird calls which are somewhat discordant. The atmosphere is never despairing but rather mellow, world-weary, nostalgic and, at times, pleasant. The reference to the opening material in bars 38-40 possibly swings the balancing scale in favour of melancholy. The poet comes to the understanding (which is supported by the composer's sympathetic setting) that nature cannot really console him with its innocence and beauty because it does not comprehend the inevitable, cyclic nature of its own existence.

The Before-After structure in the song, "Before And After Summer" as established in the title of the poem, is retained in the setting with the addition of an interlude between the two sections. The material describing the mood of that time of year when winter, almost over, with one final vicious attack against the advent of spring, brings gusty winds, sleet, snow and shivering cold. The main musical elements achieving these are: a quick tempo, dissonant harmony and *staccatissimo* indications. Contrary to one's expectation the interlude does not give an impression of summer but reiterates the winter atmosphere and then plunges the listener into despair with a dominant ninth chord in third inversion (in b minor). In spite of the description of miserable, wintry conditions the Before-section retains a sense of expectation which is absent from the After-section. A melancholy disillusionment sets in with the advent of autumn. The main musical elements responsible for this atmosphere are: the long *legato* phrases, the slower tempo and harmonic rhythm and the more stagnant rhythmic material.

The falling of the leaf in the song, "The Too Short Time" is portrayed vividly with the descending tendency of the material in the first eight bars. The resultant mood is that of despondent melancholy. The section immediately following (b. 9-20) has an interesting mixture of acceptance, confidence and despair. In this *aria* section (b. 21-31), nature and the poet have accepted the inevitable decline of summer. Time is portrayed as a pounding bass line beneath a meandering, even-flowing figuration. The result is a rather neutral atmosphere and there is an attempt at being 'brave' amid the obvious signs of winter. A valiant attempt at retaining the memory of the splendour of summer is made in the final section of the song (b. 32-37) The piano accompaniment suggests a cheerfulness against all odds.

The next group of pastoral songs has a direct reference to human interaction with nature or in natural surroundings: "The Master And The Leaves", "Summer Schemes", "Childhood Among The Ferns", "Overlooking The River", "Epeisodia" and "At Middle-Field Gate In February". The settings of the slightly varying atmospheres in the song, "The Master And The Leaves" can be summarized as follows:

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Prelude & Stanza 1<br>(bars 1-40) | Light-hearted, joking, jolly (spring)<br>Rhythmically active, <i>ostinatos</i> , <i>staccatos</i> , imitation, quick tempo          |
| Stanza 2<br>(bars 41-62)          | Bolder, still joyous (summer)<br>Major key, louder dynamics, slower rhythmic activity   |
| Stanza 2<br>(bars 63-77)          | Eerie, dark (night-time)<br><i>Ricochet ostinatos</i> , minor key, quiet dynamics, mildly dissonant chords                          |
| Stanza 3<br>(bars 78-102)         | Opening atmosphere, contemplative, hints of melancholy (autumn)<br>Less active, minor key, <i>legato</i> ,                          |
| Stanza 3 & 4<br>(bars 103-141)    | Quiet introspective, contemplative, somewhat reassuring<br>Slower tempo, less rhythmically active, new motifs - small melodic range |
| Postlude<br>(bars 142-156)        | Opening tempo and atmosphere, briefly<br><i>Pizzicato</i> , long pedal notes, opening motif.  |

The setting of atmosphere is a little too direct or obvious to be entirely successful. The use of preconceived motifs and using these in imitation seems to force the setting of atmosphere. The text of the poem "Summer Schemes", falls into two sections: references to and eager anticipation of summer and all it entails; references to human involvement and experience in a brooding relationship in which little is certain or resolved. Sections referring to the former tend to have a major or rapidly changing key, they are texturally more transparent, rhythmically, melodically and harmonically more active and thus the anticipation of and rejoicing in the beauty of nature is supported in the setting. In the sections referring to the latter, the key tends to be minor, the texture denser and the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic material is less active. The unpredictability of human existence is supported by the setting.

The atmosphere portrayed in the song "Childhood Among The Ferns", carefully follows the text and falls into five distinct sections:

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Sunny introduction<br>(b. 1-5) | This pleasantly warm, rich opening consists of the same material, in a different key, as the appearance of the sun in a later section. The first drops of light rain are suggested.  |
| Light rain<br>(b. 6-22)        | <i>A facile, staccato</i> accompaniment in simple triple metre creates the impression of a carefree, dancing atmosphere. The descending tendency of the accompaniment suggests a drizzle descending on the fern-roofed hide-out.                         |
| Stronger rain<br>(b. 23-50)    | Teeming rain is indicated by more active rhythmic material. The initial <i>ostinato</i> and continuous semi-quaver movement creates a bouncing, incessant impression of a swiftly passing shower. Towards the end of the section, the activity subsides. |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Emerging sun<br>(b. 51-57)   | Pleasant, sunny atmosphere resumes by restating the opening material, but does not last.   |
| Contemplation<br>(b. 57- 69) | A pensive, slightly melancholy and foreboding atmosphere closes the song and is the result of a general descending tendency, a flat directed modulatory pattern and the unstable plagal cadence in b flat minor. |

The mood and atmosphere of "Overlooking The River" is fairly uniform throughout the song. There is an intensification of restrained emotion towards the end which is not a radical departure from the earlier mood. The pastoral description of the river, birds and flowers in the fading daylight as portrayed in stanzas 1 - 3 of the poem is translated into music to achieve a warm, serene, luscious and placid atmosphere. The means by which this is achieved are a fairly slow tempo but active rhythmic material, tonal harmony, a relatively dense texture, minute internal imitations, many suspensions and a narrow dynamic range. The more sombre element of regret is introduced from bar 32 and the attributes which change significantly are the tonality, which becomes less stable and has modal tendencies and the more static rhythmic activity.

Two contrasting atmospheres are created in the song "Epeisodia". The first and third stanzas are similar (the third slightly more intense) in their pastoral setting. All the associations of pastoral existence are present: innocence, delight, youthfulness and beauty. These are supported musically by a major key, the carefree mordant motif, the *grazioso* tempo, the middle and higher piano register and the uncomplicated tonal and harmonic characteristics. The second stanza is in sharp contrast and portrays feelings of unease, tension, grimness and insistent and incessant movement. These are supported musically by the use of different minor keys, a low piano register, a descending *ostinato* figure and more dissonant harmony (see example 13).

In the song "At Middle-Field Gate In February" a sodden winter picture is painted with unusually chromatic chords, quiet dynamic levels and a slow tempo (see example 20). In this frame of mind, a much earlier summer is recalled and, for as long as these thoughts last the atmosphere is warmer through the use of more tonal harmonies, a stable tonality and slightly quicker tempo. The extent and the acuity of these pastoral settings tally with Finzi's life-long yearning for the countryside and his eventual settling at Church Farm, Ashmansworth, in 1939.

### 11.3 Moods concerning man's relation to the universe

There are three songs which deal with man's relationship with the stellar universe. They do have pastoral connotations in that they deal with a natural phenomenon: "The Comet At Yell'ham", "Waiting Both" and "At A Lunar Eclipse". The first of these was discussed in some detail earlier (see example 4).

In the song "Waiting Both", a strong sense of waiting is enhanced in the setting by the use of a slow tempo, *Lento* = *c. 50*, vague tonality and relatively long solo piano sections. A sense of uncertainty in human and universal affairs is supported by chromaticism and mild dissonance. The isolation and loneliness which is experienced by man and star is musically matched by a several octave distance between the treble and bass clef parts of the piano (b. 24-26). Both star and man experience an incompleteness and yet perceive their latent potential – these are reinforced by the strong vocal and piano climaxes between bars 19 and 21. The piano accompaniment suggests the strangeness of the circumstances, a star and a man having an intimate conversation on the subject of their fragile existence. This is supported by the high pitched opening and varied recapitulation (b. 24-25), the vaguely tonal meandering, the descending motif and the almost accidental dissonances that occur throughout the song.

The atmosphere of the song, "At A Lunar Eclipse" is uniform throughout except for one small deviation towards the climax. This uniformity is difficult to characterize: there is a sense of strangeness, linked to the phenomenon of a lunar eclipse; remoteness, linked to the vast expanse of the stellar universe; awe, man's humble perception of his place in the universe; misery, realization of the earth's toil and trouble; disillusionment, linked to man's puniness in the universe. The composer captures these complex emotions and moods by using a combination of musical elements: no metric accents are provided and evenness of performance is specified, *sostenuto sempre, senza accento*; the tonality shifts regularly; the dynamic range is extremely small; extended chords and added tones are used to achieve a largely diatonic dissonance; a dense piano texture is used; a fully explored piano range is employed. These elements are not individually responsible for any specific effect but rather in combination, achieve a successful setting of the atmosphere.

#### 11.4 Moods concerning the deceased, churchyards or ghosts

Poems about the deceased, churchyards or ghosts are explored by Finzi a number of times. Two of these songs also have pastoral connotations in that they deal with the Hardian notion that the dead grow into the vegetation of the churchyard: "Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard" and "Transformations". The setting of atmosphere in the former follows the formal construction of the song:

|                        |                              |   |
|------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Prelude<br>(b. 1-14)   | Dreamy, distant, melancholic | Transparent texture, pedal notes,<br>wide range, soft dynamics,<br>melodic and rhythmic motifs      |
| Stanza 1<br>(b. 15-32) | Lightly, innocent            | Middle register, <i>staccatos</i> ,<br>Major key, slow tempo,<br>soft dynamics, transparent texture |

|                          |                             |   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Stanza 2<br>(b. 33-68)   | Congenial, robust           | Quick tempo, middle range,<br><i>legato</i> , E major key,<br>slowly growing motif  |
| Stanza 3<br>(b. 69-88)   | Lightly, almost indifferent | Slow tempo, <i>staccatos</i> , dense<br>texture, loud dynamics,<br>large range, A major   |
| Stanza 4<br>(b. 89-110)  | Bold, proud, excited        | Key changes, quicker tempo,<br>dense texture, high register,<br>loud dynamics, <i>legato</i> , climax   |
| Stanza 5<br>(b. 111-126) | Lightly, innocent           | Slower tempo, quieter dynamics,<br>middle range, dense texture,<br><i>legato</i> mostly   |
| Stanza 6<br>(b. 127-170) | Weary initially, positive   | Quick tempo, loud dynamics,<br><i>legato</i> mostly, transparent texture,<br>E major key  |
| Stanza 7<br>(b. 171-194) | Lightly, conversational     | Slow tempo, <i>staccato</i> and <i>legato</i> ,<br>quiet dynamics, dense texture<br>initially, transparent texture<br>at the end, G major key |

There is a general sense of cheerfulness in spite of the fact that the poem deals with the dead.

The second song "Transformations", has an even more exuberant atmosphere. It starts with a mood of suppressed animation which develops gradually to an ecstatic celebration of life in the final bars. The animation is carried largely by the semi-quaver rhythmic movement and is enhanced by two modulations to the dominant key (b. 27 and 42). The louder dynamic levels and denser texture towards the end of the song reinforce the belief that the deceased have become one with nature through the same energy which "once awoke the clay of this cold star", to use Wilfred Owen's phrase from his poem, "Futility".

The songs, "Paying Calls" and "In A Churchyard" recount visits by Hardy to a graveyard. The moods of these visits are significantly different. The atmosphere of "Paying Calls" is fairly uniform throughout the song. The exceptionally long introduction sets a suspended, melancholic mood. An element of nostalgia and weariness is present at the same time. In the brief section (b. 81-9), reference is made to midsummer and here a less successful attempt is made to modify the atmosphere to be more lighthearted: melodic chromaticism in the vocal part, a new minor key and less active rhythmic material in the string parts are used. The melancholy atmosphere of the rest relies heavily on the lulling rhythmic movement, natural minor keys, gentle largely diatonic dissonance and moderately slow tempo.

The mood in the song, "In a Churchyard" constantly evolves as the text requires. The most unexpected change of mood occurs in the section where the deceased are given voice: a major key, quiet dynamic level, textural density, rhythmic stagnation and low vocal register have a calming, positive and almost heroic effect. This musical irony lies in the fact that the dead are shown to welcome their own state while one would expect the contrary. Knowing, however, that the dead are merely relating Hardy's philosophy of life – sceptical realism – the composer purposely chooses to support these words with 'positive' musical material because of his identification with the poet's views.

Two songs, "The Phantom" and "The Clock Of The Years" have a ghost or a spirit as a central figure and an eerie atmosphere enhances the circumstances in which these creatures might be encountered. The former is a ballad in which the poet describes a man's mental image of a girl horse-rider who tortures him with her youth, liveliness and phantasmic appeal. The piano prelude (b. 1-12) suggests her wild riding and there is an ebb and flow of the image as the man's mind creates and rejects. The accompaniment settles in d minor and the information concerning the man's "careworn craze" is related (b. 20-29). The piano accompaniment slows down at "moveless hands and face and gaze" but very soon the rider motif appears again. This motif punctuated with *staccatos* is interjected to create a mocking effect (30-33). Chromaticism in conjunction with the text, "Does he see this sight" (b. 69-70), creates a troubled atmosphere to reinforce the man's state of mind and the chromaticism creates a sympathetic pathos where the text refers to the man as "toil-tried". The defiance of the rider is suggested in the piano accompaniment and a climax is reached when she "Draws rein" (b. 104) then mockingly races off into the distance. The atmosphere becomes resigned and sinister in the postlude (b. 107-115) as though the image is fading to nothing.

Much has been said concerning the atmosphere of the song "The Clock Of The Years" and only a brief summary will be given here. The mood of the song is macabre on the one hand and distraught on the other. References to the spirit's presence and words come into the first category and references to the protagonist's state of mind and emotion into the second. The harmonic instability, dissonance, accents, lower piano register, *recitativo* and *arioso* singing style are the features which contribute most to the mood and atmosphere.

Two more songs, "The Dance Continued" and "Channel Firing" feature the dead but to very different effect. The mood of the former is mostly neutral, passive and deliberately undramatic – the narrator in an unflinching tone, cautions his beloved not to mourn his death. There is a section (b. 23-45) in which elements of harvest feast are portrayed but this joyous mood does not last. As a result of the modal characteristics and indiscriminate use of d natural minor and F major, the tonality is suspended in limbo and this heavily influences the atmosphere: non-committal, distant, ungrudging and peaceful.

The atmosphere portrayed in the song, "Channel Firing" has been discussed extensively (see example 24 and 34) and will only be dealt with briefly as a macabre contrast to the previously discussed song. A large portion of the poem is preoccupied with opinions of the dead. God is depicted as being enraged and disillusioned and skeletons converse about the dismal state into which human beings have brought the world. A combination of musical elements result in a convincing setting for this unlikely song-text: the extremely low register of the piano is employed to create a eerie atmosphere; harsh dissonance and dense textural chords enhance references to war and God's angered speech; rhythmic motifs realistically imitate gunfire.

### 11.5 Moods concerning loss, isolation or dwelling in the past

Finzi returns seven times to poems dealing with a sense of loss or isolation or dwelling on the past: in "Where The Picnic Was", "Exeunt Omnes", "The Sigh", "Waiting Both", "To Lizbie Brown", "The Self-Unseeing" and "Amabel". Some of these have been discussed in earlier categories and are only mentioned here for the sake of completeness. The setting of the atmosphere in "Where The Picnic Was" follows the text perhaps too directly in that the different sections are in neat compartments:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Solitary isolation<br>(b. 0 <sup>3</sup> -6) | Single part prelude, expressive intervals, vague tonality   |
| Stifled, quiet sadness<br>(b. 7-12)          | Pan-diatonic chords, inactive rhythmic material, two-note slurs   |
| Laboured climbing<br>(b. 13-19)              | More active rhythmic material, more clearly in C major  |
| Cold wind<br>(b. 20-23)                      | Two very active motifs, trills, high register   |
| Delight<br>b. 24-31)                         | Loud dynamics, high register, descending line, <i>tremolo</i>   |
| Solitary isolation<br>(b. 32-42)             | Single line (opening material), quiet dynamics, inactive rhythmic movement, extremely high register, <i>dolce</i> (b. 41) |
| Reference to city<br>(b. 43-46)              | More active rhythmic material, modulation a-f-a minors, thicker texture, high register                                    |
| Stifled, quiet sadness<br>(b. 47-52)         | Pan-diatonic chords, inactive rhythmic material, two-note slurs   |
| Solitary isolation<br>(b. 53-63)             | Single part prelude, expressive intervals, vague tonality   |

Although the original mood evolves, there is a periodic return to the contemplative isolation of the poet which is the overriding atmosphere of the song.

"Exeunt Omnes" has the same directness as the other early songs. The atmosphere has a sense of ambivalence

opening with a neutral impression of detachment, followed by a bold impression of the fair and then slowly declining into nothingness, *niente* (see example 28). A short summary links the atmosphere to the musical material:

Detached, isolated, even baffled  
(b. 1-6)

Long pedal chord (no third), Dorian mode suggested in voice, *parlando* singing style

Bold impressions of a noisy fair  
(b. 7-16)

Loud dynamics, strong accents, dissonance, g natural minor, quick tempo

Subsiding excitement, quietude  
(b. 17-22)

Decrescendo, modulation to d minor,

Vacancy, emptiness, waiting  
(b. 23-36)

Slow moving, chordal *ostinato*, larger range, Dorian mode, transparent accompaniment textures

Increasing isolation, monotony  
(b. 37-58)

Two-note *ostinato*, slower tempo, higher register, motifs from previous songs

Melancholy, acceptance  
(b. 59-83)

*Ostinato* motif over two bars, Dorian mode, long pedal chords, high to extremely high register, very quiet dynamics

The mood and atmosphere created in the song, "The Self-Unseeing" depends largely on the piano accompaniment. The grim, sinister atmosphere of the first section (b. 1-21) is derived from the dissonant harmony, slow tempo and low register (see example 22). The development of atmosphere in the second section (b. 22-46) is directly in contrast: pleasant, uplifting, enchanted and glowing. This is achieved by consonant harmony, quicker tempo and a higher piano register. The most effective setting of atmosphere occurs where the idea of a 'glow' by the fire-side is portrayed (b. 42-46). The *tremolo* motif in the right hand part with an occasional chromatic note, the octave displacement of the broken chord figure in the left hand, the mildly dissonant chord structures and the rising melodic line each contribute to the magical effect which is created to enhance the recollection of the poet's vision from his childhood. The bars following the dramatic pause return to the severity of the opening section.

Example 42 The Self-Unseeing Bars 41 - 48

The musical score for Example 42, "The Self-Unseeing" Bars 41-48, is presented in a standard musical notation format. It consists of a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Ritardando molto" and "Tempo I." with a "pp" dynamic. The vocal line includes the word "Yet" with a dotted line. The piano accompaniment shows a tremolo motif in the right hand and a broken chord figure in the left hand.

## 11.6 Moods concerning the passing of time

Closely linked to the previous theme are the songs dealing with the passing of time and its effect on the process of memory and ageing: "Former Beauties", "I Look Into My Glass" and "Life Laughs Onward". The mood of the song, "Former Beauties", varies between pensive regret and disillusionment (the effects of ageing on physical beauty and temperament) and the pleasant memory of former beauty. The pensive mood has been achieved by tonal and modal meandering and a *parlando* singing style (b. 1-13). The pleasanter mood has been achieved by the dance-like metre (b. 14-27). The song ends positively – the poet's pleasant memory intact – in a secure D major, a quicker tempo and with the use of more active rhythmic material.

The atmosphere of "I Look Into My Glass" is melancholic throughout. There is, however, a subtle development from a dejected indifference (set in G major in the first six bars) to a more embittered disillusionment (set in d minor from bars seven to eleven). This culminates in tragic despair (in bars twelve to fifteen with the words, "But Time, to make me grieve, \ Part steals, lets part abide; \ And shakes this fragile frame at eve \ With throbbings of noontide.") and subsides into nothingness in the final bar (b.17). These subtle developments in atmosphere are achieved not only by the change of key, but by a careful development of dissonance, chromaticism, accentuation and decline in dynamic level.

The mood of "Life Laughs Onward" shifts from being pensive and regretful to being positively encouraged and somewhat light-hearted. The atmosphere is closely linked to the unfolding narrative in the text which is supported by numerous harmonic and tonal shifts. The tonic chord in second inversion is used to modulate abruptly (b. 9<sup>1</sup>, 12<sup>1</sup>, 19<sup>1</sup>, 21<sup>1</sup> and 27<sup>1</sup>) and can be linked in particular, to the setting of a positive mood – this being a remnant of harmonic procedures used in the Romantic era.

## 11.7 Moods with a philosophical undercurrent

The last category of songs is a loose grouping of songs with a philosophical undercurrent. Two of the songs contain an element of hope, one considers the future, another the past and three more are of an introspective nature: "The Oxen", "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly", "In Five-score Summers", "Rollicum-Rorum", "A Young Man's Exhortation", "So I Have Fared" and "Let Me Enjoy".

### 11.7.1 Hope

The two poems that experiment with hope are "The Oxen" and "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly". The

former is more tentative in its expression – the words "Hoping it might be so", really referring to the Christian myth – and has a child-like innocence. In the song, a mood of serenity prevails although this is slightly modified in the chorale-like middle section in which the tempo increases marginally. There is also a brief positive shift towards the end of the song (b. 40) where a reference to hope is made. The most influential elements that contribute to the slightly mystical serenity and child-like apprehensiveness are the use of the Dorian mode, the extremely quiet dynamic levels and the restricted range of the accompanying string quartet. Secondary contributing factors are the fairly slow tempo and mixture of rhythmic activity with a slight emphasis on the slower movement. The hymn-like middle section is reminiscent of an ancient carol which enhances the atmosphere of reverence.

The latter song, "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly" has a tranquil atmosphere, particularly undramatic until the star is mentioned after which slowly at first – as if awakening to the idea of life possibly having meaning – the atmosphere changes from the beginning of the last stanza (b. 56) to being more positive and eventually exuberant (see example 2). This change is achieved by the use of a thicker texture, louder dynamic levels and vocal and piano climaxes.

### 11.7.2 Future and past

The song dealing with the future, "In Five-score Summers" could possibly also be classified as a love-song of sorts – if one is prepared to accept the possibility of a more grim union, namely in the intestine of a worm. The mood is sinister and troubled mostly as a result of the dissonance and chromaticism. There are feeble attempts in the musical setting at lifting this mood (b. 7<sup>3</sup> "joys", 15 "prime") but it sinks into black humour – at the prospect of the peculiar union, after death, in the intestine of a worm (b. 22-23). The declamatory vocal part is well-suited to the atmosphere of disillusionment and cynicism which prevails in the poem. There are only two references to the beloved and, in both cases, she is dead: "a pinch of dust" (b. 11) and "thy worm" (b. 22). This is certainly a satirical poem, the mood captured successfully in the setting.

The poem dealing with the past is the jolly "Rollicum-Rorum". The atmosphere is uniform throughout. The text and music suggest satire, irony, bucolic humour and even a certain rustic crudeness. The composer achieves these results with sharp accents, dynamic contrasts, tonal harmony with abrupt but brief modulatory shifts, rests and deliberate 'unnecessary' changes of metre.

### 11.7.3 Introspection

The first of the introspective songs is "A Young Man's Exhortation". The mood created in the accompaniment and melodic line closely follows the text and has been carefully and delicately constructed:

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Stanza 1   | Calm and positive                                     |
| (b. 1-7)   |   |
| Stanza 2   | Active, exuberant and excited (containing the climax) |
| (b. 8-11)  |   |
| Stanza 3   | Calm and encouraging, much like the first             |
| (b. 12-17) |   |
| Stanza 4   | Pensive and sombre – realistic about man's lot        |
| (b. 18-25) |   |
| Stanza 5   | Inactive, sober and a little melancholy               |
| (b. 26)    |   |

The song "So I Have Fared", is more uniform in its quietude than "A Young Man's Exhortation". The only exception occurs in the last stanza where a slight intensification of emotion is portrayed. This slight change in atmosphere is achieved by modulating to a minor key, using static harmonic rhythm, a low dynamic level, a deeper piano register and a slower tempo, *Meno mosso*. The only other significant aspect of the setting of atmosphere is in the piano material accompanying the second last stanza: "So I have fared through many suns,". Here the unyielding 'throb' of time is characteristically suggested in the piano bass. A more relaxed *arioso* vocal style suggests a greater acceptance of the complexities of the self.

The atmosphere created in the song, "Let me Enjoy", follows the text carefully. The first and fourth stanzas are similar in musical material and both contain religio-philosophical musing on the part of the poet. Although there is an attempt at being positive, "Let me enjoy the earth" (stanza 1) and "lift glad, far-off eyes" (stanza 4), darker melancholic thoughts colour the mood considerably, "other aims than my delight" and "Though it contain no place for me". This ambivalence is skilfully captured by the composer through the use of a major tonality but coloured with expressive accented *appoggiaturas* and fairly passive rhythmic material. The middle section (b. 10-25) of the song has a similar ambivalence. Here the idea of enjoyment of life is explored but ends in the agony of unrequited love. This suppressed agony is portrayed by increased rhythmic activity, quicker harmonic rhythm and higher piano register.

Of fifty-one songs, six are unequivocally positive throughout. There are three, furthermore, which start out in melancholy vein but become more extrovert towards the end. Forty-two of the songs entertain elegiac atmospheres and experiences. It seems as though Finzi was drawn to these, possibly as a result of his own unhappy childhood. Kathleen Robinson in her unpublished Ph.D thesis, *A Critical Study of Word/Music Correspondences in the Choral Works of Gerald Finzi* (1994), says the following in her biographical sketch:

The effect of Farrar's death on Finzi was intensified by the singular number of personal losses he had suffered by the time he was eighteen years old. He was but eight years old when his father died, eleven when the first of his brothers died, twelve

when a second brother died, and seventeen when his last surviving brother died, which was also the year of Ernest Farrar's death (1918). It is perhaps impossible to overestimate the impact that World War I, with the horror of trench warfare and the brutal extinguishing of many of the brightest lights of the newly emerging generation of European young men, had on the people who lived through it. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that even for a time when human destruction prevailed on such a horrific and wide-ranging scale, the sheer number of intimates permanently lost to Finzi during his formative years is extraordinary, by whatever standard one uses to measure such calamities. What is certain is that from this concatenated series of five deaths, endured in the brief chronological span of nine years (age eight to age seventeen), emerged a man who thereafter would view life as a largely tenuous enterprise, underlaid at every turn with potential tragedy and loss. This acute sense of the transience and uncertainty of life has been attributed to Finzi by virtually everybody who knew him. (1994:16-7)

## 11.8 Summary

Hardy's careful setting of atmosphere in his poetry is one of the strongest features that made Finzi return to these poems so many times. The breadth and diversity of topics, subtlety of moods and unconventional views expressed therein appealed to him as a person and a musician. It is little wonder that he treated the setting of atmosphere as an organic whole: it grew out of and developed with the text. The various atmospheres concerning love, pastoral moods, macabre settings concerning the dead, churchyards and detached philosophical musing are set with careful manipulation of each element of music to achieve a particular end. Following the poet's realistic pessimism, moods of melancholy and quiet contemplation are most frequently translated into musical language.

## CHAPTER 12

### Stylistic tendencies

#### 12.1 Romanticism

Finzi's compositional style and his characteristic manipulation of the basic elements of music are the focus of this chapter. As a broad introduction, Burton Parker's insight in an article entitled *Textual-Musical Relationships in Selected Songs of Gerald Finzi* (*NATS Bulletin Vol 30* (1974)) is well worth quoting:

According to Douglas Moore, 'throughout the entire romantic period we find the expressive side of music stressed at the expense of the formal'. A broader view is pursued by Friedrich Blum. 'There is no "romantic style", as such, the way there are definable, delimiting styles for other periods of music history'. 'The only unity left, in the term Romanticism, 'is the name.' Willi Apel says that a few composers born between 1850-1880 continued the romantic movement well beyond 1900 and were sometimes called neo-romantics (Edward Elgar, 1857- 1934 and Gustav Holst 1874-1934, to name two English composers). From these 'neo- romantics' an independent 'English late Romanticism was ultimately arrived at in the specifically English musical language of Vaughan-Williams and Benjamin Britten'

The term romantic then in describing the music of Gerald Finzi provides only a vague idea of the nature of his musical style. According to Arthur Bliss (a composer and former pupil of Finzi's), 'If a foreigner new to England wished to taste the special flavour of English music, and find wherein it differed from the music of his own country, he could not do better than study first the music of Gerald Finzi.'

Stemming from Parry and Vaughan-Williams, Finzi added a poetry and sensitiveness all his own, owing nothing to Schoenberg, Hindemith, Bartok, and Stravinsky, the foreign masters of the twentieth century. Well versed in the musical and literary traditions of England, he expressed love for their traditions alone. (Arthur Bliss 1957:5),

(Burton Parker 1974:10)

This 'vague neo-romanticism' is no musical escapism on Finzi's part but an individual's reaction to private tragedy on the one hand and the global horror of two World Wars on the other. While Penderecki and others exhibit the sensory-external aspects of the horrors of war in their music, Finzi strives to achieve a sensory-internal solution to the emotional damage of his own suffering.

## 12.2 Dissonance

Alan Walker, in an article entitled *Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)*, captures an essential element of Finzi's style (quoted from *Tempo Vol 52 (1959)*):

One of the prime causes of the misunderstanding of Finzi's style lies in the fact that he always refused to avail himself of the higher range of dissonances which is a distinguishing feature of twentieth-century music. To understand Finzi's attitude toward dissonance one must understand dissonance. Strictly speaking, it is not possible to talk of any chord as dissonant or consonant until one gives it a context. Not until the upper and lower limits of harmonic tension have been established in the work under discussion is it possible to speak of consonance and dissonance. These qualities are purely relative....A dominant seventh chord in a motet by Byrd is as dissonant in its context as the opening chord of the finale of Beethoven's ninth symphony. It is of vital importance to recognise the fact....that Byrd's dominant seventh does not cease to be dissonant merely because Beethoven's tonic thirteenth is more so. Each chord is dissonant in its context and meaningless out of it.

The fact that Finzi chose to work in a 'tension range' which was lower than that of most of his contemporaries is an observation but it is not a criticism. Within this range he was able to achieve a power and conviction in his use of dissonance that to my knowledge has gone unnoticed before. (1959:6-7)

Finzi's use of dissonance is strikingly individual and abundant in a large number of songs of which "The Clock Of The Years", "Channel Firing", "He Abjures Love", "At Middle-Field Gate In February" and "I Said To Love" are prime examples. John Russell in his article, *Gerald Finzi - An English Composer*, supports this view (quoted from *Tempo Vol 33 (1954)*):

His [Finzi's] style is so different from those of his much-noised contemporaries that he is regarded as a placid backwater off the main stream; as one who (it would seem) almost perversely writes music which is a joy to perform and a pleasure to listen to. There are so many passages which find their way immediately to one's heart. There is beauty, sensitivity, immaculate craftsmanship, and colour, all working within what is necessarily a small-scale idiom to provide a richly endowed corner of the none-too-spacious garden of readily accessible music of our time. (1954:15)

A final general comment on influence and style is made by Harold Rutland in his article *Homage to Finzi* published in *Music and Musicians Vol 15 (1966)*:

There is much to enjoy and admire in Finzi's work. He was a composer of utmost integrity, with a genuine lyrical gift, and a keen love and understanding of poetry; he was also a fastidious craftsman continuing to revise a piece, sometimes for 15 years or more, before allowing it to be performed. His style, essentially diatonic and derived from such composers as Purcell, Boyce, Parry and Vaughan-Williams, with hints of Bach....nevertheless has

individuality and belongs to the 20th century by reason of its harmonic freedom and its occasional 'scrunches', though these do not always sound convincing. (1966:48)

### 12.3 Aspects of the Vocal Style

The Hardy songs as representative portion of Finzi's solo vocal work, show a preference for the baritone voice. There are thirty-three songs for baritone or low voice (*By Footpath and Stile* (6), *Requiem da Camera* (1), *Earth and Air and Rain* (10), *Before and After Summer* (10) and *I Said to Love* (6)) and eighteen for tenor or high voice (*Oh Fair to See* (1), *A Young Man's Exhortation* (10), and *Till Earth Outwears* (7)).

The use of intervals in the vocal parts shows Finzi's sensitivity to the voice as an instrument as one of his most important stylistic features. There is only a single song, "When I Set Out For Lyonnaise" with an incidence of larger intervals (fourths and larger) higher than 30%. This is not to say that no vocal challenges occur. Vocally taxing passages are found in "A Young Man's Exhortation", "Former Beauties", "Summer Schemes", "Waiting Both", "In A Churchyard" and "The Too Short Time". There are also isolated occurrences where intervals larger than an octave occur in the vocal part, for example in "Rollicum-Rorum" (ninth), "Channel Firing" (tenth), "In Years Defaced" (tenth). On the other hand, a *quasi recitativo* or *parlando* singing style often results in a conservative vocal approach. Three of the very early songs (Paying Calls, The Oxen and Voices From Things Growing In A Churchyard) and two later songs (Budmouth Dears and The Sigh) are extremely voice-friendly, containing less than 10% larger intervals in the vocal part.

### 12.4 Accompaniment

The accompaniment of the Hardy songs is nowhere subordinate or a mere harmonic support to the vocal part. It is often entirely independent of the voice yet always carries the atmosphere of the text with painstaking accuracy. There are only seven Hardy songs which are not accompanied by the piano.

There is one song with no prelude and another with a single upbeat in the piano part; the rest all contain preludes ranging in length from a single bar to fifty-three bars (Paying Calls). The average is two to four bars of sensible atmosphere setting and the occasional longer statement such as in "Proud Songsters" and "The Phantom". All songs contain interludes of varying lengths and purposes from a number of beats of repose as in, "I Look Into My Glass" to a substantial section containing a change of mood as in "Before And After Summer". The most noteworthy interlude, however, remains the *Quasi cadenza* (b. 50) occurring towards the end of "I Said To Love" which is an atonal, emotional outburst unparalleled in Finzi's output. A significant

number of songs contain no postlude and long postludes are rare. The longest postlude serves as the conclusion to the cycle *By Footpath and Style* which ends with the song "Exeunt Omnes". In three songs a short but intense postlude drives the song to an ecstatic climax on the final chord. These are "Transformations", "The Market-Girl" and "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly".

The register of the piano is explored fully in individual songs (Epeisodia and At A Lunar Eclipse), but on the whole the middle to low register is favoured, a sonority which tallies with the majority of melancholy or sombre texts which have been chosen. The chosen register or varying registers used in the piano part, especially where deliberately confined in compass, the writer has found to be directly related either to the text or to the atmosphere suggested by the text. Indications of articulation are used sparingly although there are songs such as "He Abjures Love" with meticulous and relevant indications.

The string quartet as accompaniment to the Hardy songs, possibly because of the immaturity of the songs in which it is employed, is not entirely successful. Certain idiomatic aspects of string writing are present, such as the use of harmonics at the end of "Exeunt Omnes", the *ricochet* technique in "The Master And The Leaves" and the odd *pizzicato* indication here and there. It is not entirely fair, however, to make stringent stylistic deductions from works which the composer withdrew from his own catalogue and whose printing plates he had destroyed.

## 12.5 Duration

On the subject of the setting of texts, John Russell makes the following observation in his article, *Gerald Finzi - An English Composer* (quoted from *Tempo Vol 33* (1954)):

If there is anything at all to commend Finzi's vocal work, it must first and foremost be his sensitive response to the cadences of the English language. There is perhaps a more intimate marriage of these to the pitch and rhythm of the music than in the work of any other British composer. (1954:11)

Finzi's musical solutions to the metric irregularities of Hardy's poetry show a sensitive approach and innovative mind. Two songs are entirely unmetred (The Comet At Yell'ham and At A Lunar Eclipse), two are partially unmetred (Shortening Days and The Clock Of The Years) and a further song (Ditty) contains no time-signature but is barred throughout, the stronger beats being merely suggested. There are also a number of internal metric deviations. These Finzi, idiosyncratically, indicates with square brackets above the piano and vocal parts so that they will not to be missed in performance (The Dance Continued and In The Mind's Eye).

The composer's use of rhythmic material, with exceptions, tends to be conservative. The use of rhythmic motifs is one of the strongest features of structural cohesion (*Before And After Summer*, *In The Mind's Eye*) and there is often a strong sense of rhythmic consistency emanating from a song (*Paying Calls*, *The Dance Continued* and *For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly*). The most important rhythmic feature is that rhythmic motifs (except in the early cycle) grow out of the vocal setting and then find their way into the accompaniment, prior to the introduction of the voice, in imitation with the voice and after the vocal part has ceased. This procedure of rhythmic cross-fertilization has a strong influence on the close-knit texture of Finzi's music.

Tempo setting and change of tempo is an aspect attended to by the composer with the utmost care. An example of a song in which numerous tempo changes occur, each following the text carefully, is "Childhood Among The Ferns". It has been shown that a large majority of Finzi's settings tend to be melancholic, sombre or contemplative. Diana McVeagh, in an article, *Composers of our time: Gerald Finzi*, referring to Finzi's instrumental music, says the following concerning tempo (quoted from *Records and Recording Vol 23 (1980)*):

It was characteristic that it was the fast movements he discarded, the slow he retained. Fast music always presented problems for him. His natural cast of mind was contemplative, his natural way of extending a musical idea was by imitation. (1980:31)

There are, however, a number of Hardy songs with a sustained, animated tempo, supporting excitement in the text: "Budmouth Dears", "When I Set Out For Lyonesse" and "Rollicum-Rorum". Most of the Hardy songs are of a medium to slow tempo tallying with Finzi's 'contemplative' frame of mind.

## 12.6 Pitch Organization

Like the rhythmic material, melodic motifs and their subtle variation operate as elements of cohesion in many songs (*Ditty*, *The Sigh*, *So I Have Fared*, *To Lizbie Brown* and *Amabel*). Of the larger intervals which occur in both vocal and accompaniment parts, the perfect fifth is the most prominent and is often used in a context where emotional aspects of the text are emphasized (*Former Beauties*, *The Too Short Time* and *Life Laughs Onward*). The consistency of melodic style can be seen in the similar openings of two 'unrelated' songs. The preludes of "Amabel"(1932) and "I Look Into My Glass (1937?) follow the same descending melodic contour at different tempos and rhythmic detail. There is a similar linkage of material between the postlude of "Ditty" (b. 62) and the postlude of the "Aria" from *Farewell to Arms, for tenor and strings*. In both songs the tonic is sustained in the accompaniment's upper register while the lower part presents a figure involving notes from the dominant seventh with the leading note clashing against the tonic.

As far as tonality is concerned, a number of tendencies emerge. The first is that there is a considerable modal influence. Two of the songs are more modal than tonal (The Oxen and The Master And The Leaves) and a number have modal tendencies without being explicitly modal (Budmouth Dears, Ditty and Former Beauties). A strong modal feature is the consistent use of the natural leading note in the minor key which often leaves the tonality vague (Waiting Both and It Never Looks Like Summer). Another tendency which shows itself is the non-committal 'drift' between the major and its relative minor (The Dance Continued and To Lizbie Brown) which has the effect of indifference, weariness or serenity. This same tonal indifference gives rise to a pan-diatonic procedure in sections of two songs (Where The Picnic Was and The Best She Could). Extended tonality, a recognised twentieth century procedure, is present in many a Hardy song in an embryonic form, if not in fully fledged practice (The Clock Of The Years, The Self-Unseeing, In A Churchyard, Channel Firing, In The Mind's Eye and The Too Short Time). There are minor examples of bi-tonality which cannot be ignored simply because they show Finzi's use of more 'modern' techniques when he required these for specific expressive purposes (The Comet at Yell'ham).

Reference has been made to Finzi's use of dissonance: chromaticism is very carefully related to the text throughout. There is a number of striking examples of deliberately unchromatic songs which contain a single chromatic alteration (Ditty, To Lizbie Brown, Let me Enjoy and For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly). At the other end of the scale, there is extensive chromaticism in a number of songs associated with a greater sense of drama or more intense emotion (The Clock Of The Years, Channel Firing, He Abjures Love, In The Mind's Eye, In Five-Score Summers, At Middle-Field Gate In February and I Said To Love).

Finzi's harmonic language, on the whole, is conservative by twentieth century standards, but he, himself remarked in the first of the *Crees Lectures: The Composer's use of Words*, quoted from *Lecture I (May 1955)*, that:

We must...be careful not to confuse idiom with individuality and we must realise that composers may still be significant even though their language is one which, for the time being, is not in current use. (1955:7)

This statement places Finzi's own harmonic use in perspective. His individual sound palette consists of the use of triads, more often than not in first or second inversion. Finzi extends the triad to the thirteenth but more often to the seventh and the ninth. The inverted form of these extended chords is also favoured above the root position. A prominent harmonic characteristic is the use of a quartad in third inversion. There is also a tendency to modulate via the direct use of a new tonic second inversion triad which appears as a surprise (Life Laughs Onward). The Hardy songs exhibit a definite avoidance of the dominant chord in favour of the

subdominant and the secondary triads (ii, iii, vi). There are also examples, on a fairly limited scale, of the use of added tones, strikingly effective where they occur (At Middle-Field Gate In February). Non-harmonic tones especially those that occur on the beat, are a central element of Finzi's use of diatonic dissonance (Proud Songsters and In Years Defaced). Lastly, one of Finzi's hallmarks is the consistent use of close-knit contrapuntal procedures. These occur in the form of free counterpoint, informal imitation and more extended *fugato* procedures (At A Lunar Eclipse). Referring to the contrapuntal opening of "A Young Man's Exhortation", Stephen Banfield says, in *Sensibility and English Song* (1985):

He wrote such contrapuntal passages all too easily, often at the price of weak harmony; here the idiom tends towards complacency, which is hardly the mood of the poem. (1985:280)

## 12.7 Dynamics, Texture and Structure

Finzi's use of dynamic markings can be summarized simply. Dynamic markings are used sparingly and more so in the earlier works. The reasons are two-fold: firstly, Finzi intrinsically believed in the integrity of the performer and, secondly, his own constant revision of his music indicates a certain indecisiveness with regard to detail, including that of dynamics and of articulation. There is, however, to every generalized statement that one makes about Finzi's music, an exception. "Channel Firing", one of the highlights of Finzi's solo-song output, contains detailed dynamic markings. As far as dynamic range is concerned, there are two songs with an extremely low level and narrow range: "The Oxen" and "At A Lunar Eclipse". Finzi's last Hardy song, "I Said To Love", contains the loudest marking, *fff violento*. The dynamic markings at either extreme of the scale are always directly related to the textual meaning and atmosphere.

The textures which Finzi used as accompaniment vary mostly between three and five parts. Transparent textures are used in the preludes to "The Comet At Yell'ham" and "The Too Short Time" and are effective in portraying an atmosphere of isolation and bleakness. Denser textures are also many but the best example is found in the accompaniment to the song "Channel Firing" in which the chordal texture is not only dense but also placed in the extremely low register. These features are at the heart of the Gothic atmosphere created in the song. Finzi generally follows the sensible principle of placing closed position chords in the higher register and allowing larger distances between simultaneously sounding pitches the lower the register.

Standard formal types are recognizable in Finzi's settings even if they do not correspond to textbook blueprints. There are unitary formal structures mostly for the shorter songs, binary structures for poems consisting of two stanzas and ternary structures for settings consisting of three or four stanzas. There are a

number of episodic songs (chain form), some of which contain, at the end, references to earlier material, others more carefully following the textual development. Lastly there are rondo or refrain-like structures which contain recurring melodic fragments, largely responsible for cohesion in a song. One statement about the musical structure of the Hardy songs is undeniable: Finzi follows the textual meaning meticulously and does not impose preconceived formal structures on any of the poems. The musical structure grows organically out of the text. Structural weaknesses in large-scale choral or instrumental works (referred to by Robinson 1994:686) are not apparent in the Hardy songs, other than in one or two of the early songs in the cycle *By Footpath and Stile*.

## 12.8 Mood and Atmosphere

Creating the atmosphere follows the texts meticulously. Three tendencies are apparent: there are songs with a uniform atmosphere throughout (*To Lizbie Brown* and *The Sigh*) and others with a slight deviation towards the end (*Two Lips* and *For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly*). There are also songs with two definite, contrasting atmospheres (*Shortening Days* and *Before And After Summer*) and there are songs with a strong developing atmosphere (*Childhood Among The Ferns*, *The Self-Unseeing* and *The Market-Girl*). The register of the accompaniment is often the single most important element which influences the atmosphere. The song "The Comet At Yell'ham" is the most striking example of a slowly descending register in the piano accompaniment from the extreme treble to the extreme bass. Here the colder upper register is associated with the isolation of a distant comet while the lower register is associated with humankind. In contrast to this gradually changing atmosphere, the song "Life Laughs Onward" has a swiftly developing atmosphere and a positive outcome: "my too regretful mood \ Died on my tongue."

Stephen Banfield closes his chapter on Finzi in *Sensibility and English Song* with the following words:

Standing off from some of Finzi's greatest songs, such as 'The Phantom', 'Proud Songsters', 'He abjures Love' or 'I said to Love', one perceives in them an uncanny sense of the eschatological. The poet's preoccupation with love and its ultimate cessation and the composer's assimilation of the old, dry, unadorned bare bones of three or four centuries of dominant-based western tonality are fused together in lyrical statements about love and death, time, tradition and destiny. Bearing the weight of the Romantic experience in this musical language as Hardy does in the philosophy, Finzi stands at the end of a lyrical tradition, a tradition stretching back beyond Schubert to figures such as Lawes and Pelham Humfrey. While Britten was still to build on parts of that tradition, there were vital aspects of its codification of deep, timeless emotion through the expressiveness of tonality that Finzi was perhaps the last composer fully to understand. (1985:299-300)

This view was expressed almost thirty years after the composer's death. Maybe with less objectivity but certainly closer in time (only three years after Finzi's death), Alan Walker wrote in an article entitled *Gerald Finzi (1901-56)* quoted from *Tempo Vol 52 (1959)*:

Finzi was a musical poet *par excellence*. In an age given over to experimentation in a musical language that is fast becoming purely instrumental, one of Finzi's greatest contributions to the art was to remind us of its vocal roots. Such a reminder demanded courage and integrity in the first half of this century, and I believe that posterity will be grateful to him. Because Finzi was more concerned with the present than with the future, I believe that the future will regard him as more typical of our times than many of his more 'progressive' contemporaries. (1959:10)

## 12.9 Summary

If a label has to be given, one can refer to Finzi's music as being vaguely neo-romantic. A more accurate description would be: a sensory-internal, musical response to emotional damage sustained by an individual as a result of private tragedy and global turmoil. The result of this response is that Finzi's music is accessible and it does not conform to contemporary practices. Finzi is an exemplary craftsman, understands poetry and approaches it with integrity. His music exhibits a true lyrical gift.

The voice is treated with sympathy and the accompaniment, always growing from the vocal material, accurately sets the atmosphere. Metric and rhythmic characteristics show a unique sensitivity to the idiosyncrasies of the English language. The lyrical, melodic material provides a basis for structural cohesion while firmly imbedded in traditional tonality with the occasional modal and chromatic influence. Harmonic language, considering all fifty-one songs, is conservative but dissonance features as a means of expression without exploring the higher ranges thereof. Dynamic markings are used relatively sparingly because Finzi trusts the integrity of the performer. Texture, as a compositional element, varies as the atmosphere of particular songs demands. There are very few structural weaknesses apparent in the Hardy songs, possibly because of the confined 'space' of the genre. Larger scale settings closely follow the text and the structures are, therefore, successful. The setting of mood and atmosphere is the single most significant achievement of the composer. The atmosphere grows organically out of the text and renders a variety of moods as diverse as the texts themselves.

## Chapter 13

### Coda

Gerald Finzi and Thomas Hardy are, in essence, very different characters: the former serene, seemingly resigned but with boundless, latent nervous energy; the latter, a dynamic, restless soul with a vivid imagination. As artists, they are essentially different as well: Finzi's musical language is restrained and conservative; Hardy's use of words, elaborate, inventive and novel. Their circumstances too were different: Finzi had a lonely, traumatic childhood but a fulfilled adulthood, a happy marriage and a premature death; Hardy, on the other hand, had an unstressed, happy childhood, a progressively more difficult adulthood and eventually strained marital relations; he lived to the age of eighty-eight. There is, therefore, no obvious parallel in their circumstances that would lead Finzi to return to Hardy's poetry as often as he did.

The kinship Finzi felt with Hardy, however, lies primarily on the philosophical plane. They shared a deeply-rooted pessimism of the kind that takes, first and foremost, note of uncertainty and incompleteness as theories to live by, not that these graver notions are the only facets of their respective views of life. Burlesque humour and positive energy enter into their worlds more than occasionally but are always tempered with an undercurrent of melancholy. Gerald Finzi genuinely loved the poetry of Thomas Hardy and wanted to share this love with whomsoever would respond to his settings.

To use Finzi's metaphor: he built his own coral reef from the musical materials available to him. He chose the voice, the most ancient of all instruments, to carry his musical message and treats it with sympathy and understanding. Steeped in the traditions of the English language, Finzi allows its lilting metres and idiomatic rhythms to dictate the musical metres and rhythms. Never is the music forced on to the text. He explores the confines of traditional harmony and tonality, sometimes closer to the boundaries than is generally admitted. His use of extended tonality and particular range of dissonance always related to the textual meaning, brings him closer to twentieth century techniques of expression than to that of the nineteenth century or so-called Romanticism. He creates, above all, sensitive atmospheres which sensibly combine the basic elements of music: the timbre of the voice and accompaniment enhance the underlying mood; rhythmic material grows from the textual rhythm and serves as main element of structural cohesion; the melodic material and turn of phrase are vocally based and are the single most characteristic aspect of his style; the use of tonal and modal harmony ensures a linkage with past traditions; the abundant use of counterpoint in the accompaniment creates close-knit textures. This is Finzi's coral reef: sensitive, unobtrusive, powerful, moving.

In spite of Banfield's criticism that Finzi's music is ultra-traditional, conservative, hopelessly tonal and never exploring the as yet unexpressed, Finzi created an individual voice, powerful enough not to be mistaken for any other, and significant enough to move us forty years later. What is amazing about his music is that in spite of the fact that most of it was written between the two World Wars, there is very little sign of musical despair. In spite of the tragic losses he suffered as a result of the First World War and the anxiety the advent of a second World War caused him, he is able to speak from a seemingly unperturbed heart, wishing to render musical re-assurance rather than indulge in further destruction. Is it not more reasonable to appreciate and criticize what Finzi has achieved within his chosen language rather than to complain that he has not adopted another or did not follow the trends of his time?

Hardy's poetry kindled a spark in Finzi which ignited an abundance of creative mental activity. This activity manifested itself in fifty-one settings of Hardy poems. While Thomas Hardy is undisputed in his fame as novelist and reluctantly acknowledged as great poet, Gerald Finzi has to take the place of a 'minor' English composer of the first half of the twentieth century. The present writer hopes that this study will begin to show the true worth of Gerald Finzi as a composer of songs: One who speaks from the heart to the heart without pretence or apology.

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