

HUMPHREY SEARLE

IN HIS WORDS AND MINE

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Chapter One

Many composers suffer neglect and some are, or become, completely forgotten. Few composers, however, have been as badly treated as Humphrey Searle and yet to the discerning and knowledgeable, he is a truly great composer.

He was born in Oxford on 26th August, 1915, one of three sons born to Humphrey, a civil servant, and Charlotte Mathilde May who, although born in England, had no English blood. Her father was Sir William Schlich, who came from Darmstadt in Germany, and his wife, Lady Schlich was of French, Belgian and Italian descent.

Sir William Schlich was born in Darmstadt in 1840 but went to India in 1868 to be the inspector-general of forests. By the end of the 19th century, he was back in England founding the Government School of Forestry at Cooper's Hill, Windsor, and this facility was transferred to Oxford University where Schlich became its first Professor of Forestry. Sir William died in 1925 (he was 85) and he had been a good pianist as was Humphrey's father's sister, Phyllis.

Humphrey's parents were married in a tin church in Rangoon, Burma, on 27 November 1914. They had courted for two years in Oxford and Mr Searle joined the Burma Civil Service in 1912 and had to wait two years for his wife to join him. They honeymooned in Mandalay, 300 miles away on the Irrawaddy river.

Mr Searle's family came from Collumpton in Devon. Humphrey's grandfather, his father's father, was Humphrey Frederic Searle who was a respected man although some in the Searle family were not. He was a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists and became an Anglican minister with posts at a Teacher's' Training College, first in London and then in Winchester, before returning to the parish of Netley Marsh, Southampton. He wrote some anthems and sacred choral music.

Mrs Searle, returned to Burma after Humphrey was born, and Michael was born in Burma in 1917. Humphrey was brought up by a nanny in his grandfather's house in Oxford where grandfather wrote his book, Schlich's Manual of Forestry.

Michael was brought by his mother to Oxford in 1919 and then Mrs Searle went back to Burma. Humphrey did not meet his father until 1921.

Humphrey's father was not musical but had a brilliant mind. He won scholarships to Bradfield and New College, Oxford, and was a fine athlete when young. He lived until 1965. His wife also studied at Oxford as a Home Student and was a pretty girl but a rebel.

Young Humphrey went to a kindergarten at Oxford High School and then to the junior department of Dragon's School.

In 1925, grandfather Schlich died suddenly which upset Humphrey tremendously and grandfather was 85. Grandmother returned to Antwerp where she remained until her death in 1940 at the age of 80. Aunt Gertrude set up home with Dorothy Broster author of *The Flight of the Herons*, and novels

about the Stuart rebellion and she became a sort of honorary aunt to Humphrey. Aunt Eleanor was married and Uncle Willie had digs in London. Aunt Elsie became an Anglican nun.

Previously around 1923, Humphrey's Uncle Willie and his sister, Elsie, set up home in a tall, narrow house on Parliament Hill near Hampstead Heath. Willie worked for the War Office. Humphrey and his brothers moved in. Humphrey went to a day school called Heath Mount. Then it was decided that Humphrey should go to a boarding school which was Scaitcliffe at Engelfield Green, Windsor. He was head boy at this school for two years.

At school, Humphrey had piano lessons. Some have said that he was never proficient as a pianist, although, in later life, he could be persuaded to play a Bach Prelude and Fugue at parties. But as a young man, he could certainly play Liszt. What Searle did become, among many other things, was a competent conductor with an impeccable ear for meticulous sound that earned respect as a record reviewer, writer and commentator. In all his critical writings he was always constructive. He was never harsh or scathing which is some indication of the fundamental goodness of his character. In fact, some have said that this was one cause of the neglect of his music, particularly from the 1970s onwards. He championed many musicians and young composers to the extreme of his unflinching generosity, and his own career suffered. He was reticent and self-effacing often to the point of being embarrassing. If the present writer commented on one of the many touches of genius in his work he would invariably reply by demonstrating some passage in Bach, Beethoven or Liszt that he thought to be marvellous.

His parents were still in Burma in the 1920s and so Humphrey and his brothers went to live with strangers after the death of Sir William with a family called Scott who lived in Beckley, north of Rye in Sussex. The countryside did not appeal to Humphrey neither did the High Church that the Scotts took the boys to with its incense, acolytes and ritual. It turned Searle away from Christianity and later he became an old fashioned Socialist with left wing and atheistic views.

Searle's real awakening to music came in 1928 when he went to Winchester School, that September, where he met Robert Irving and James Robertson. Irving was to become musical director of the Sadler's Wells Opera at the same time that Humphrey Searle was on its advisory panel in the 1950s. The availability of a gramophone at school enabled the three students to familiarize themselves with the classical repertoire and with such modern works such as *The Rite of Spring* and *Pacific 231*. Searle loved dramatic music such as that by Wagner and Richard Strauss, although Haydn and Mozart took longer to be appreciated.

He began to take harmony lessons with George Dyson, who was "profoundly impressed" by Searle.

But Dyson (1883-1946 and a Yorkshireman) was so out of date and hated anything modern.

Humphrey composed a piece and played the timpani in its performance. The work was based on themes from the *Mastersingers* overture. Dyson was troublesome and had an interview with Searle's mother on one of her visits from Burma, about her son taking a degree. Dyson walked up and down, very irritated.

The formation of the BBC Symphony orchestra in 1930 led Humphrey to compose a concerto for double bass and orchestra. He also wrote a piece for two violins and piano for his brother Michael and his teacher to play with Humphrey at the piano. The work showed the influence of Richard Strauss.

Having won a Classical scholarship to Oxford University, Searle went up in September 1933 and, while he was absorbing the appropriate material for his degree, he pursued musical studies with

Sydney Watson, the organist of New College. Searle's preference was to read French, German as well as music. He also studied Latin and Greek.

Mention must be made of Sydney Watson. He was born in 1923 and studied at Keble College and died in 1991. He was the organist of New College, Oxford from 1933. In 1938, he became the Music Director at Winchester College before going to Eton in 1956. He was a lecturer in music at Christchurch, Oxford and its cathedral organist. He was awarded the OBE in 1970. He conducted Walton's *The Twelve* and gave the first performance for about 400 years of Tavener's *Missa Corona Spinea*.

Searle's teacher for the classics part of the course was Henry Ludwig Henderson a good teacher but somewhat pedantic. Humphrey made many friends and Robert Irving joined him at Oxford. The College put on Verdi's *Requiem* and Humphrey played the bass drum in the performance. He was forever grateful to Watson for the introduction to Verdi. Joining the Oxford Musical Club, he became friends with Joseph Cooper who, later, had a TV show called *Face the Music*. He was also friends with Trevor Harvey the conductor, and the singer, Basil Douglas.

Humphrey did not compose as such but made arrangements of music by Russians and Chopin for a ballet. Oxford's Musical Club put on operas like Dvorak's *The Devil and Kate* and Rameau's *Castor and Pollex*. Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande* was performed soon after its completion with Cooper at the piano and Harvey conducting. Searle learned a lot from weekly visits from Sir Hugh Allen, professor of music at Oxford and director of RCM.

However, some attempts were made at composition by Searle including a revision of a work written at school arranged for two pianos. At his own expense, he took some harmony lessons at the Music School but they were tedious.

Hugh Allen was professor of music at Oxford and Director of the Royal College of Music and in his classes used to play classical and romantic works and was keen on the late songs of Schubert which Humphrey initially admired.

In his second year at Oxford, Humphrey studied the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle and the modern philosophers.. His tutor was Isaiah Berlin who was also a music-lover, and then a small music society was formed which invited such scholars as Albert Einstein, who was an expert on Mozart. Searle composed his two songs from James Joyce as he was fascinated by this writer and these songs would have been lost had I not had a copy and had them printed and recorded by Judith Buckle.

Political unrest was the anxiety of these days. Britain was somewhat overshadowed by the political ideals of Auden., Spender, MacNeice and Day Lewis. The discerning could see what Hitler's rise to power would do which was reinforced by the Spanish Civil War and Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia. The Labour party buried its head in the sand and only the Communist party were resisting fascism and Humphrey took part in several left-wing demonstrations. Humphrey was also interested in literature, painting and archaeology.

If interest in music germinated in 1928, then it blossomed six years later when Searle heard the first English performance of Berg's *Wozzeck* under Sir Adrian Boult, broadcast in March, 1934. "It knocked me sideways, " admitted Searle, who, consequently, put his energies into finding out about the serial style of composition as advocated by Arnold Schönberg, the leader of the Second Viennese School, which included Webern and Berg, two of Schönberg's distinguished pupils. Today, there is no doubt about the eminence of Berg's incredible score but it says a very great deal for Searle that he recognized its greatness at once. Fifty years or so later, musical opinion has realized that twelve-note music is an original means of composition without the restrictions of traditionalism. In the hands of brilliant composers such as Schönberg, Webern and Berg and, indeed Searle, this musical language

has proved itself to be wide-ranging and varied in expression and emotion yet embodying the strictest discipline, as is demonstrated, for example, in the language of Bach.

In 1934, Humphrey had been sent to his Belgian cousins at Mirwart in the Ardennes to learn French. Michael and Humphrey went on a walking tour in Alsace. In 1935, Toscanini came to London and conducted the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Humphrey had heard him conduct the Eroica on headphones in Winchester in 1930. Humphrey was given a ticket for one of these later concerts in the Queen's Hall and the concert included Debussy's La Mer and Brahms Symphony no 4 which Humphrey had never liked that much. But Toscanini's performance changed Humphrey's mind. This was a revelation as was the broadcast of Wozzeck. Robert Irving had shown Searle Schoenberg's Suite for piano Op 25 and then Adorno arrived in Oxford. Thomas Mann was writing Dr Faustus the story of a twelve-note composer who went mad because of syphilis.

In 1935, Searle went to Germany to improve his command of that language. While there, he saw operas such as Falstaff and Gounod's Faust. He saw Weingartner conduct Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique. Humphrey stopped in Munich to see Richard Strauss conduct Salome and Elektra.

The history of music has produced many enigmas. One such is vacillating fashion. A composer's work can be subjected to savage hostility and, later, with a change in musical trends, it is reassessed as acceptable and sometimes admired. Yet the composer, if he is still living, cannot claim recompense for the injustice he has suffered. There is some truth in Arthur Honegger's remark that the only qualification for the possibility of being a great composer is being dead.

Searle was helped in his research by Theodor Ludwig Wiesengrund Adorno, who had studied with both Schoenberg and Webern and had come to Oxford as a refugee from Nazi Germany. He lived from 1903 to 1969, was a Marxist and philosopher and hated fascism. He also hated Stravinsky in an irrational and prejudicial way.

Humphrey was always keen on the music of Berlioz and saw Hamilton Harty conduct Symphonie funebre et triomphale in the Queen's Hall. This composer had been a favourite of his for some while and when Hamilton Harty conducted Berlioz the audience would not let him go. The critics tried to make out that this concert was a failure and Searle counteracted these reviews by an article of his own printed in the Monthly Musical Record thanks to J Westrup who met Searle due to an invitation from Allen

Sir Hugh Allen took an interest in Searle's work and introduced him to Walton who was encouraging. Walton visited Oxford later and gave a talk on van Dieren's opera The Tailor, and Searle decided to study with van Dieren but he died having had kidney disease for some years.

Humphrey's father came home in 1936 and purchased a house in Beckley called Annfield on the hill above the Scott's family house.

Chapter Two

Humphrey did not spend much time at Annfield, apart from holidays from Oxford, although there was a big celebration there for his 21st birthday. There was a garden shed which was used as a study containing Grandfather Searle's piano and an oversize book case full of books.

The 50th anniversary of the death of Liszt fell in 1936. He was regarded as flashy and vulgar but Richard Crichton opened Searle's eyes to the works of Liszt, particularly the Annes de Pelerinage which are beautiful and fine pieces and certainly not vulgar. Sacheverell Sitwell's book on Liszt was read and this dealt with Liszt's character and the times in which he lived. Constant Lambert organised a ballet Apparitions with some of the more experimental music of Liszt which was orchestrated by Gordon Jacob.

Inspired, Humphrey wrote to Lambert about a concert he wanted to put on in Oxford, a city then devoted to Brahms and Joachim who visited there many times, and this concert took place at the Carfax Assembly Rooms on 8th November 1936. Lambert agreed to conduct Liszt's Malediction which would be the first public performance in the UK.

The programme, all of works by Liszt, was as follows:

- Five Pieces from Weihnachtsbaum
Sydney Watson
- Romance Oubliee arr for string quartet and piano by Searle who played the piano part
- La Lugubre Gondola
- Czardas Macabre (first British performance)
Robert Irving
- Grand Galop Chromatique arr for two pianos, eight hands
Sydney Watson, Philip Cranmer, John Gardner, Humphrey Searle
- Mephisto waltz no 3 for piano duet
Sydney Watson, Humphrey Searle
- Schlaflos Frage and Antwort
Sydney Watson
- Nuages Gris and Tarantella (Dargomijsky-Liszt)
John Gardner
- Recitation, Der Trauerige Monch
David King-Wood, John Gardner
- Malediction for piano and strings (first public performance in the UK)
Robert Irving

The concert was both a great success and a sell out and several distinguished people attended such as Sacheverell and Georgia Sitwell, Louis Kentner and his wife Ilona Kabos, Lord Berners, Cecil Gray and Gavin Gordon who composed the ballet The Rake's Progress.

When it has been said that Humphrey was not a great pianist, if you look at the music he played, he could not have been a slouch. Irving was splendid in Malediction and Lambert was delighted with the work.

Many friendship resulted from this important concert. Searle introduced Kentner to the music of Alkan, and Lambert and Searle became great friends. In Germany, Searle had acquired the score of Boccherini's Ballet Espagnol and brought it to England but Vic Wells Ballet thought it too short to stage.

Lambert was not the best correspondent but wrote to Humphrey a few times about rehearsals and his fascination with trains. He was highly respected and the author of the brilliant book 'Music Ho', as well as the musical director of Vic Wells Ballet started by Ninette de Valois in 1932.

What Lambert was was a very fine conductor of ballet and a distinguished pianist since he would rehearse the ballet with just himself at the piano. He had impeccable taste in music and was both interested and knowledgeable on painting and literature.

He was born on 2 August 1905 and studied with Vaughan Williams, R O Morris, Malcolm Sargent, Herbert Fryer and the difficult George Dyson. Lambert was married twice, the second wife was Isobel, who later married Alan Rawsthorne. Constant had an on-off affair with Margot Fonteyn and eventually died of pneumonia and undiagnosed diabetes on 21 August 1951.

Humphrey was very keen on the ballet and, with his mother, often went to see the Ballet Russes de Monte Carlo at the old Alhambra Theatre in Leicester Square which company had inherited most of the repertoire of Diaghilev's Company including a good number of the dancers. The standards were very high and, in those days, ballets did not have sections for the principles to have solo numbers and show off. Sadly, this practice has returned in recent years.

In Oxford, a number of distinguished pianists gave recitals in the uncomfortable Town Hall. There was Moriz Rosenthal, who had been a pupil of Liszt, a short, squat man with an enormous moustache who played in the grand manner. There was the young Horowitz, but the most impressive was undoubtedly Rachmaninov who had a long Russian face, a gloomy expression and close-cropped hair; he played Schumann and Chopin's B flat minor Sonata in which he followed Rubinstein's example of playing the funeral march as if it were a procession coming, arriving and going. This Searle found disconcerting, but the finale was ghostly and sent shivers down the spine. This superlative pianist ended with some of his pieces, but the audience would not let him go until he played his famous Prelude in C sharp minor. He glared at the audience and, with some distaste, launched into this work with tremendous power.

When Rachmaninov died in Beverley Hills on 28 March 1943, Barbirolli looked into his coffin and said, "This is the best performance Rachmaninov has ever given!" It was a deliberate and nasty remark in keeping with Barbirolli's hateful character.

It should be noted that while Humphrey did not like some composers, he never disembowelled any. In this, and in many other respects, he was a kind, nonjudgmental and decent character. In fact, and as we have said, many have spoken of the fundamental goodness of his character.

In 1937, Humphrey became the music critic of the undergraduate weekly, *The Cherwell* and among his articles and concert reviews was an essay *A Plea for Alkan*. Searle arranged for articles on contemporary composers such as Berg and Bartok and attacked such sacred cows as Sibelius who he admitted was a very good composer indeed but with an inflated reputation at the time, as Elgar is today. There were also folk song composers and composers of feeble, derivative music.

Searle also engaged in some film criticism in *The Cherwell* visiting a cinema at the unfashionable end of Walton Street known as *The Fleapit*. The best films were mostly French or Russian and were praised at the expense of the glossy commercial films so that the cinema manager threatened to disallow Humphrey going.

About this time, Sir Hugh Allen offered Searle a scholarship to study abroad and wherever he liked. Humphrey would go to the Royal College of Music in London at the end of the Oxford term and take up the scholarship in the autumn. It was suggested that he went to Nadia Boulanger in Paris, but Adorno supported him to persuade Allen that he went to Vienna. Berg had died in 1935 who, otherwise would have been first choice, and Adorno wrote to Anton Webern to see if he would take Searle. Webern agreed and Searle's father said, "In that case, you can't take your Civil Service exam". Humphrey replied, "To hell with the Civil Service".

He successfully took his MA degree in Oxford and prepared to face the future.

In the meantime, he found a room in Bayswater and spent his first London evening with Cecil Gray who he had met at the Oxford-Liszt concert. He was one of the first musicologists who reacted against

the German classical tradition and preferred composers such as Berlioz, Liszt, Alkan, Busoni and van Dieren. Gray had written an unorthodox book on the history of music and books on Sibelius and Peter Warlock who was a close friend. The evening was spent drinking much whiskey and Searle was not felling his best the next day at the College singing in the chorus in a rehearsal of Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony.

William Walton suggested to Humphrey that he studied with John Ireland and so Searle went to his studio in Gunter Grove, Chelsea. Ireland was an impressionist composer but wrote some fine songs including sensitive settings of Hardy and Houseman.

The Walton reference is particularly interesting as, at the end of the War in 1945, he implored Humphrey to give him lessons. As a result, Walton's style changed and his music became more transparent such as in the Johannesburg Festival Overture and the splendid Symphony no 2. Walton said, " I could have had lessons with anyone but choosing Humphrey was the best choice I ever made and I owe to him more than I do to anyone. "

When Walton said this to me at his 80th birthday concert, there were tears in his eyes. I do not understand why books on Walton do not mention these important two years of study.

Searle's lessons with Ireland were the last of the day and he recalled some quotes Ireland made:

"I studied with Elgar and he said, 'Don't use trombones on the fourth beat of the bar' and he kept on saying this. Elgar was a hateful man and this is what he said about Vaughan Williams, 'That man Williams is gallivanting all over America when he should be at home thinking about death.' He also said that Walton was 'coining money hand over fist' and that Britten 'always had something in the shop window and even when he farts someone will record it.'"

Ireland taught Britten for a while at the College and said that he was ' a dreadful pupil and a very nasty individual. '

As for Ireland, Humphrey found him an endearing character and they remained friends for many years. In fact, Humphrey had a magnificent capacity for friendship.

Ireland was interested in primitive ritual and magic which may be felt in some of his works such as The Forgotten Rite and Mai Dun (Maiden Castle in Dorset). He was also interested in the mysticism of Arthur Machen but drew the line at the ' madness of Cyril Scott. '

Other pupils of Ireland at this time were Peter Crossley-Holland, Patricia Morgan. Peter Pope and Richard Arnell.

College finished in July and Humphrey went to Germany in August to research some of the music of Liszt at the Liszt Museum in Weimar as he was thinking of writing a book about this composer. This included a visit to Berlin to acquire permission from Dr Peter Raabe who was the Curator of Weimar and had written two works on Liszt. Raabe now had a position under the Nazis in succession to Richard Strauss but received Searle affably and allowed his research.

Humphrey went to Salzburg and saw Toscanini's Falstaff and Beethoven's Fidelio also under Toscanini who followed Mahler's practice of playing the Leonora Overture no 3 during the scene change before the last scene which breaks up the action.

Student friends from Oxford took Searle on a car trip to Munich and there was talk of Hitler, a failed painter who was refused admittance to the Vienna Art School before the First World War because

his work was conventional and not very good. When he came to power, he attacked 'modern art' and arranged an exhibition of Nazi art.

The student friends took Humphrey to Vienna at the beginning of September and he took a room in the Wollzeile near the cathedral and, a few days later, his friends took him to Webern who was living in Maria Enzersdorf, a small town ten miles south of Vienna where Beethoven lived towards the end of his life. Webern and his wife had an apartment on the upper floor of a two storey house. He greeted Humphrey with the words, "You are late!" Apparently, he was expected on 1st September and it was now the 6th. But Humphrey proved to be a serious and hard working student and discovered that Webern's only income was from pupils, and Searle's scholarship was only £100.

Chapter Three

Searle showed Webern his harmony exercises from the Royal College, and Webern said that he ought to study Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre*. With some difficulty, Humphrey managed to obtain a second-hand copy of this book which kept them occupied for nearly six months. It was translated into English in its entirety and is a fascinating and very thorough study of harmony, ranging from simple exercises up to the methods of Debussy, Bartok and early Schoenberg. Searle used to go to Webern twice a week and wrote harmony exercises for each lesson; Webern did not merely look at these but played them on the piano to see how they sounded and, if they sounded wrong, he pointed out the reason. He had an extraordinary ear. At Humphrey's first lesson, Webern talked for an hour on the properties of the common triad which was incredibly interesting. Clearly, he had a real knowledge, understanding and love of the basic elements of music, which he imparted to his pupils. At any rate, he made his pupil feel that every note he wrote was important, and that there must be a reason for writing every note. "Don't trust your ears alone", he said: "Your ears will guide you all right, but you must know why you do what you do". He obeyed this rule himself with his own composition. On Webern's piano, Searle would see the twelve transpositions of the note-row (and their inversions) relating to the piece that he was working on at the time. He appeared to try out in sound each transposition and which form of the note-row (original, inversion, retrograde or retrograde inversion) would be the best for his purpose, and he did not work out a mathematical order of row-forms.

At that time, he was composing the String Quartet Op. 28 and then the First Cantata Op. 29. He did not show "work in progress" to his pupils but, towards the end of Humphrey's stay, he did give Searle an analysis of his Piano Variations, Op. 27 which had recently been published. Humphrey was present at its first performance in Vienna, given by the young Viennese pianist Peter Stadlen who went to live in London. Stadlen has described elsewhere, the endless, and intriguing rehearsals which he had with Webern for this piece; Webern refused to tell him what the note-row was ("You are a pianist; your job is to play the notes") but he was willing to show it to Searle as a composition student.

In fact, it was difficult to hear any of Webern's music or that of other members of the twelve-note school in Vienna at that time, except at chamber concerts given by the Austrian section of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) in obscure halls in remote suburbs of Vienna. Such modern Austrian music was played in the concerts of the Vienna Philharmonic and Vienna Symphony Orchestras which was usually of music by Franz Schmidt or lesser composers such as Egon Kornauth and Eugen Zador, hardly household names today. Berg's *Wozzeck*, which had had over a hundred performances in Germany and elsewhere in the 1920s, had not yet been performed at the Vienna State Opera.

Viennese musical taste was extremely conservative. When Bartok's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* was given its first Viennese performance early in 1938, the audience hissed at it and the orchestra had to burst into Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.

The only new opera given at the Vienna State Opera while Searle was there was *Wallenstein* by Jaromir Weinberger, the composer of *Schwanda the Bagpiper*, hardly an avant-garde figure. And when Hermann Scherchen, who had been assistant to Schoenberg in the 1912 performances of *Pierrot Lunaire* and remained a leading protagonist of advanced music, came to Vienna and formed an orchestra of young players to present a complete cycle of the symphonies of Mahler and it was very much a pioneering effort. Unfortunately, the cycle was cut short by the advent of Hitler and the Nazis in March 1938.

Apart from private lessons with Webern, Searle used to go to a series of lectures which Webern gave in a private house in Vienna. These were fortunately taken down by a short-hand writer, and have been translated and published as *The Path to New Music* and *The Path to Twelve Tone Music*. (Universal Edition. 1960. (also in English translation).

Reading them later. Humphrey can remember exactly how Webern spoke, very simply and colloquially without long complicated sentences, and asking himself questions which he then answered. These lectures give a really authentic picture of his personality. He was always quiet, was never unkind to other people, and only became angry when he thought artistic standards or personal relationships were at risk.

Webern suggested that Searle should take some classes at the Konservatorium, which was less fashionable than the well-known Akademie. His chief study was conducting; the teacher, Nilius, though not a famous conductor himself, was eminently practical and gave many useful hints which have been found helpful ever since. Humphrey also attended some classes in musical history and a few piano and percussion lessons, and played the cymbals in the students' orchestra, actually receiving favourable mention for this in the Press after the Christmas concert.

Apart from his Viennese fellow-students, many of whom had to leave Austria after the Nazi occupation and subsequently settled in England or America, there were some British students learning music in Vienna. These included Anthea Musman, the wife of the writer and BBC producer Christopher Holme; A. P. Herbert's daughter Lavender, and the Scottish pianist Jack Wight Henderson, who became a professor at the Royal Scottish Academy in Glasgow for many years who was studying with Liszt's pupil Emil von Sauer, who gave a recital in Vienna while Searle was there. Less of a virtuoso than Rosenthal, Henderson had an aristocratic dignity and complete command of music belonging to the great 19th century tradition.

British students often met at the Sunday morning concerts of the Vienna Philharmonic in the *Konzertvereinsgehaude*, acoustically one of the finest concert halls in the world. They had many distinguished visiting conductors; Furtwangler conducted Beethoven's 9th Symphony and Toscanini conducted a programme of Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Mendelssohn's *Reformation Symphony* and Saint-Saëns' *Organ Symphony* which infuriated the Viennese ("salon music", they said). Albert Coates gave a programme of Russian music (Borodin, Moussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov etc) which contained a number of first performances in Vienna; his tall figure caused the Viennese to describe him as a "typische Engländer gentleman", though, in fact, he was half Russian. Among the Viennese conductors, Bruno Walter gave a memorable performance of Mahler's 9th Symphony, which was recorded for the gramophone live from the concert hall.

The British students usually stood at these concerts at the back of the stalls and had standing places at the Opera, high up in the top gallery for one Austrian schilling (nine English old pence). The lights were left on at the back so that the students could follow the performance with the score. The repertoire was extremely large including Mozart, Weber, Wagner, Verdi, Strauss, Puccini and many others. Humphrey went there nearly every night, and his operatic experience really dates from this period. Among operas he remembered was a splendid production of *Don Carlos* with Bruno Walter; the great Alexander Kipnis was the King and a fine young Bulgarian tenor, Teodor Mazaroff, was

Carlos (He was never heard of again so perhaps he died in the war). Walter also conducted *Rosenkavalier* with three members of the original cast, Lotte Lehmann, Elisabeth Schumann and Maria Olczewska; the original Ochs, Richard Mayr, had died shortly before. This was an unforgettable experience; there was also an excellent production of *Carmen* with a pretty young Danish singer and a very effective revolving stage. Bruno Walter and Weingartner were the principal conductors, with Josef Krips was third conductor. It was fascinating to hear *Aida* conducted by the two main maestri in turn. Weingartner was pure and classical, but dramatic, while Walter was warm and romantic and equally dramatic. Searle went to see *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* more out of duty than anything else having reacted strongly against Wagner by this time, and in *Götterdämmerung* he was embarrassed to see Elisabeth Schumann as one of the Rhinemaidens in a seaweed costume shivering in a tank at the side of the stage.

When he mentioned his feelings about Wagner to Webern. he was ticked off, "He is a great composer and you cannot possibly dislike him". Humphrey was surprised at this as his own personal style was almost the opposite of Wagner's and even more surprised when Webern asked his pupil to play the slow movement of Bruckner's 7th Symphony with him as a piano duet. When they got to the E major theme in 3/4 time Webern asked, "Could your Elgar write an arch of melody like that?" Searle replied that he thought he could and supposed that Webern, brought up in the Austro-German tradition, revered all German composers and regarded others, even those like Debussy, who must have influenced him, as somehow second-rate. Schoenberg's attitude was similar.

As Webern did not teach over Christmas, Jack Henderson and Humphrey Searle decided to go to Budapest by bus. The snowclad Hungarian plain stretched in all directions, surmounted by an enormous red sun in a clear blue sky. Budapest is one of the most beautiful cities in the world, with the wide Danube flowing between the modern city of Pest and the old town of Buda with its castle on the hill. Humphrey loved it ever since and always had a fellow-feeling for Hungarians. They visited the Liszt Academy where the Liszt scholar Dr. Kalman d'Isoz welcomed Searle very cordially, who was trying to trace the MSS of the unpublished Hungarian Historical Portraits by Liszt, which eventually turned up at the Hungarian Radio after the war and were published in Budapest. Searle tried to get the *Csárdás Macabre* published by a leading Hungarian publisher, but he said: "This is neither a *Csárdás*, nor *macabre*". So it was left to the English Liszt Society to publish this remarkable work in London in 1950.

Humphrey had been given an introduction to Bartók by Louis Kentner. Bartók's music was still not much appreciated, but Searle was a great admirer and wanted to meet him without wasting his time, if possible. So he took along the MSS of the *Csárdás Macabre* which interested him very much and Bartok was persuaded him to play it on the piano. He was an excellent pianist with a very individual style, as may be heard from his records. He was a very quiet, shy man with enormous black eyes. He spoke excellent English and refused to speak German. He lived in a small house up the hill in the old part of Buda. Later on, he was shamefully treated both in Hungary and America. Humphrey remained glad that he met him.

In Vienna, the political situation was becoming more and more difficult. Shorn of her empire after the First World War and possessing very little industry, Austria existed mainly on foreign tourists who came to see the beauties of the *Salzkammergut* or sample the charms of a gay Vienna which no longer existed. Very few people had any money and even the aristocracy were mostly impoverished and there were too many trained doctors and dentists for the number of potential patients. Some people wanted to bring back the Kaiser. Others were Nazi sympathisers. The Social Democratic government of the 1920s had been ousted in 1934 by Dollfuss. His successor, Schuschnigg, had formed a semi-fascist organisation called the *Vaterlandische Front* which was supposed to keep Austria free from Nazism; but it contained a number of secret Nazis who simply changed uniforms when Hitler arrived. It was clear that a Nazi takeover was imminent. Searle asked Webern what he proposed to do if this happened and he replied that he would go to England or America if offered a

job. He spoke nothing but German and very broad Viennese German at that. This was obviously going to be difficult, especially in view of the general attitude towards the music he was writing. He even had some liking for the Nazis who at least called themselves Socialists, and thought he might fare better under them than under the right-wing Austrian government, who had disbanded his Workers' Chorus and Orchestra in 1934 and deprived him of his job as musical adviser to the Austrian Radio.

Searle's £100 scholarship had kept him in Vienna from September to Christmas but he still had £50 in War Bonds which his family had bought for him at his birth. So Humphrey realised that he would be unable to stay in Vienna after the end of February. Webern wanted him to return the following winter to study counterpoint with him.

Humphrey wrote to Sir Hugh Allen to see if his scholarship could be renewed, but received a negative answer. So he had to go.

Webern wrote an excellent testimonial for him, which is reproduced below:

February 1938

Das Herr Humphrey Searle

in der Zeit von September 1937 -Marz 1938 mein Schuler was, er studierte Harmonielehre, sei hiermit bestatigt.

Ich bringe aber auch zum Ausdruck, dass der bei erzillte Leherfolg mich ganz besonders erfreut.

Ich hatte an Searle einen ungemein arbeitsamen und getreuen Schuler und halte sein Talent fur unbedingt bemerkenswert und der Forderung wurdig.

So wunsche ich vom Herzen, dass Searle diese weitgehendst zu Teil werde und empfehle ihn mit bestem Gewissen und aufrichtiger Freuden.

Anton Webern.

February 1938.

This is to certify that Herr Humphrey Searle was my pupil during the period from September 1937 to March 1938; he studied harmony.

But I would also like to express the fact that the course of instruction which he undertook with me has given me very special pleasure.

In Searle I had an extraordinarily industrious and loyal pupil and I regard his talent as absolutely remarkable and worthy of promotion.

So I wish from my heart that Searle will take part in this career to the utmost limits and recommend him with my best conscience and sincere pleasure.

Searle left Vienna at the end of February. Ten days later Hitler arrived there...

Chapter Four

Back in England, Humphrey stayed for a short time at his parents' house and then returned to the Royal College. Then he took a room in Hammersmith where he had friends. He did not go to John Ireland again, as he wanted to learn some counterpoint and for this he went to the acknowledged expert, R. O. Morris, who had been at Oxford with his father. Morris was also an authority on crossword puzzles which he used to compile for the Times. He was married to the sister of H. A. L. Fisher, the Warden of New College. They lived in a basement flat in Glebe Place, Chelsea, surrounded by cats.

Searle took lessons in orchestration with Gordon Jacob who was the principal exponent in this subject and was also in charge of the conducting class. The student conductors were allowed to conduct the Second Orchestra and Humphrey was allotted the first movement of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony which he enjoyed conducting and he also played the castanets in Ravel's Daphnis and Chloe under Eugene Goossens.

His money had all gone and he had to keep alive and pay his college fees by giving tuition. Before going to London, he had taught Greek and the guitar (an instrument that he never properly mastered) to a boy in a country house near Guildford. In London, he alternated between teaching French to a rich young man in Berkeley Square ploughing through a translation of Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment and there was also a curious assignment in teaching logic to a clergyman in Mornington Crescent. In Oxford, Searle had learnt the medieval scholastic logic, which one could take instead of maths, and it proved useful here. This kind of existence was rather precarious and, when he saw an advertisement in the paper for the job of Chorus librarian at the BBC, Dyson, who had succeeded Allen as the Director of the College, strongly advised Humphrey to apply for it. He did so and got the job. Leslie Woodgate, the BBC Chorus Master, told him afterwards that he was frightened of Searle as he had been a pupil of Webern, but that he liked him once he saw him at the interview. So Humphrey left the College and finished his academic musical training which had lasted nine months altogether, six in Vienna and three at the College.

At the BBC, apart from Leslie Woodgate who was charming, Searle found two old Oxford friends working in the Chorus department as assistant conductors, Trevor Harvey and Basil Douglas. Humphrey was paid the princely sum of £4 a week and his duties mainly consisted of carting 500 copies of Messiah and other choral works round London in taxis and delivering them to the members of the BBC Choral Society at rehearsals. They were a large group of amateurs. In addition, the BBC employed two professional groups, the sixteen BBC singers who were on permanent contract, and the BBC Chorus who were engaged on an ad hoc basis, depending on the number of singers needed for any particular show. It was part of Humphrey's job to act as policeman and see that these singers actually turned up both at the rehearsals and broadcasts for which they were engaged. The BBC Singers had various regular jobs, such as the daily Morning Service, and they acted as a nucleus in programmes which needed larger forces. For very big public concerts, the BBC Singers, Chorus and Choral Society all combined together. Not all the broadcasts were of serious choral music. The BBC Chorus also took part in opera, light music and even variety shows, and so Humphrey was able to attend rehearsals for various different programmes. He also had to look after the Chorus Library and make suggestions for new acquisitions, Needless to say, the BBC soon acquired the complete sacred choral works of Liszt, in the Breitkopf Collected Edition. It was just as well as this edition became unobtainable when the war started. Searle had to see that the various bodies of singers had the music they needed for each show which proved particularly difficult in the case of the weekly programmes of religious music introduced by Sir Walford Davies. This tiresome old boy used to send down illegible scraps of paper from Windsor, which Humphrey had to decipher and get copies distributed to the singers. Often Davies would arrive at the broadcast itself with further additions and corrections. He was hopelessly disorganised and sentimental as well and it was a surprise that the programmes went on the air at all. There were no recording in those days and everything had to go out live.

Though his duties were somewhat humble, Humphrey Searle had at least got a job concerned with music and found a foothold in the BBC and was connected with this organisation thereafter. He also met a number of interesting people, particularly producers in the Music Department such as Julian Herbage, Herbert Murrill and Kenneth Wright.

Searle used to represent the Chorus Department at the weekly meeting which discussed the presentation of music and the scripts to be read by the announcers, and had the privilege of going to rehearsals of BBC concerts. Before joining the BBC, he had been lucky enough to obtain tickets for one of Toscanini's fantastic performances of Verdi's Requiem, and, in 1939, the celebrated conductor returned to give a complete Beethoven cycle for the BBC including all the symphonies and the Missa Solemnis. Humphrey was allowed to attend the final rehearsals on the morning of the concerts, which were in fact straight run-throughs without interruption, and this was as exciting as the concerts themselves.

He had moved to a room just off Portland Place, a few minutes walk from Broadcasting House, and was soon introduced to the George pub in Mortimer Street. This famous hostelry was mainly frequented by BBC producers, writers and actors and motor-car salesmen from Great Portland Street, and orchestral players from the nearby Queen's Hall and Sir Henry Wood is reputed to have named it "The Gluepot" as he could never get his players out of it. Here one might find Constant Lambert, Louis MacNeice, Alan Rawsthorne, Dylan Thomas, W. R. Rodgers, Michael Ayrton and many others. It was then a real rendezvous for artistes and not usually overcrowded and many BBC programmes were discussed and settled within its walls. In those days, visiting conductors stayed at the Langham Hotel and walked across the road to the Queen's Hall for their rehearsals and concerts and they usually dined at Pagani's Restaurant in Great Portland Street. The Queen's Hall was bombed during the war and never rebuilt, though it was far finer acoustically than many London concert halls. Pagani's was also bombed but survived for a time after the war as a single bar with an excellent restaurant above it. Then that too disappeared and the Langham was taken over by the BBC for offices and a studio. The George survived for a long time as a meeting-place, but was later frequented by students from the Polytechnic opposite and gradually lost much of its charm.

Searle used to meet Constant Lambert fairly often in the George, and also in "The Nest", a night-club in Kingly Street, off Regent Street. This was a simple, comparatively inexpensive club with Negress waitresses, who intrigued Constant who always fell for exotic-looking girls, and a small but superb Negro band which he liked as well. By about three in the morning, the band had really reached its peak and the sound was terrifically exciting. Many Negro performers, such as Fats Waller and the Mills Brothers would drop in after their performances at the Palladium and give a free show at the Nest. It too was a casualty of the war.

On Saturdays and Sundays, Constant and Searle often met at lunchtime at the Casa Prada restaurant in the Euston Road, which had a pleasant proprietor and the signatures of many artists embroidered on panels round the walls. Richard Shead has described such meetings in his biography of Constant, so it will only be said here that after lunch, Humphrey and Constant would often go back to his shooting-box, as he called it. He was separated from his first wife and lived in a lodge belonging to one of the big houses in Park Road, a stone's throw from Lord's cricket ground. Not that he attended the cricket matches, but he could sometimes be found in the first-class bar in Lord's Underground Station, which still existed at that time. At his shooting-box, they played Satie and other absurd pieces as piano duets on his mini-piano, a curious instrument of which for some reason he was very fond.

It was about this time that Searle first met Edith Sitwell who came to give a programme for the BBC and he was very impressed by her personality. He got to know her much better in later years.

Early in 1939, a friend of Humphrey, Rodney Phillips, kindly said he would put up some money for a concert which Humphrey was to conduct. The Aeolian Hall in Bond Street was hired as was a small

string orchestra was to be used. It was considered best to do a somewhat out-of-the-way programme. The concert started with three pieces by the curious chromatic 18th-century Irish composer Thomas Roseingrave. Constant had copied them out in the British Museum, and Searle arranged them for strings. The concert, which took place in April, also included Liszt's Malediction, a movement from a van Dieren quartet to which Humphrey had added a double bass part, with the permission of the composer's widow, and the first public performance in England of Webern's Five Movements Op. 5 in his own arrangement for string orchestra. Humphrey wrote a short piece for the concert which was a curious mixture of Webern and Liszt, and then withdrew it. The concert only had two well-known works in the programme, Bach's F minor clavier concerto and the Elegy and Waltz from Tchaikovsky's Serenade, which was not played as often then as it is now. Robert Irving was the soloist in the Bach and the Liszt. The concert was a success artistically and the reviews were quite good. Sir Adrian Boult, who besides being conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra was also the head of the Music Department and hence Searle's boss, came to the concert and gave him some free conducting lessons afterwards from time to time in his office.

Searle had written to tell Webern about the performance and to ask him if he wanted to write anything about his pieces. Reproduced is a translation of his reply.

9. 11. 39.

Dear Herr Searle,

I was very glad to hear from you again at last with such good news that you have a position in the BBC, are giving a concert, and especially that you are composing. I would like to get to know your work. What sort of orchestra are you using for your concert? Are they the strings of the BBC? Is it a radio performance or a public concert?

About my 5 Movements I would like to say.... the first is really extraordinarily difficult. If you can't have enough rehearsals or your strings can't master the movement properly, leave it out and play only the other four! Or possibly only, 2, 4 and 5. That would work too. But naturally it is nicer if all 5 are possible. You have heard the Kolisch Quartet: the orchestra should play it like this too. But compare the quartet score carefully with the orchestral version. I think this comparison will give you a lot of information. If something were written about this in the programme it would be very nice, But I can't do this myself, dear Searle. I can't fulfil your request. For the reason that I would so much like the young people to concern themselves with this at last. Write something yourself. Let me know how the rehearsals go!

Good luck!

How has the record of my Trio come out? I would like to have it. Can I get it? So you meet Clark? I am very glad. I like him very much!!! Only he never writes! Give him warm greetings from me. My new Quartet will soon be published by Boosey and Hawkes. I have read the proofs already! Write to me as soon as possible. Warm greetings from your A. Webern."

After the concert, Humphrey wrote to tell him how it had gone and also to inform him about the first performance of his cantata *Das Augenlicht*, which was given at the London ISCM Festival under Scherchen. It was Webern's first real success with an international public. Humphrey kept in touch with Webern right up to the outbreak of war.

It was about this time that Searle first met Elisabeth Lutyens; she was separated from her first husband, the singer Ian Glennie, and was about to marry Edward Clark. She had three children by her first marriage and another with Edward Humphrey did not get to know her well until later on, but

they both began to write twelve-note music independently at about the same time being the first British composers to do so.

Searle had met Edward Clark in 1935 at Salzburg with Sir Adrian Boult, to whom he had an introduction. Clark had been a pupil of Schoenberg in Berlin before the First World War. During the 1930s, Clark was in charge of modern music programmes at the BBC, and was responsible for bringing Bartók over to play his piano concertos at the Proms and Webern to conduct several concerts for the BBC. Clark left the BBC in 1936 and worked as General Secretary of the ISCM and Chairman of its British branch, the London Contemporary Music Centre.

In July, Searle went on a holiday to the South of France. On the way, an Oxford friend of his joined him and they went to Paris, where they stayed in Montparnasse which still retained some of the flavour of the Hemingway-Gertrude Stein era of the twenties, and where a number of artists, mostly of minor calibre, could be found in the bars of the Dome, the Coupole and the Rotonde on the Boulevard Montparnasse. On the last evening in Paris, they went to a club in Montmartre where men were dancing together. They soon got bored with watching them, and found a club next door which at least had plenty of girls in it, learning later that this was a Lesbian club, but at the bar Humphrey met a girl who was certainly not a Lesbian and they went off together to the Midi next day meeting friends at Cassis near Marseilles. He always loved Provence, and, at that time, Cassis was still a small fishing village. The Casino had not yet been built, and the place was only full at weekends, when the Marseillais poured in for the day. Humphrey spent a very happy four weeks there before he had to return to Paris. His companion said sad farewells in Paris, hoping to meet again, but they never did.

In London, Searle had moved to another room in Dorset Street, near Baker Street. The Devonshire Street establishment where he had previously lived had collapsed, as the Irish landlady was unable to pay the rent and all the lodgers were thrown out. While he was in France, he had lent his Dorset Street room to a girl he had met through Oxford friends, Eleanor Currie. Another friend of his, Charles Brill, had asked Humphrey if he could use the piano there. Charlie and Eleanor were immediately attracted to each other and they were married a few months later. It was a curious match. El was the attractive daughter of an Irish general, while Charlie was a Hungarian Jew about twenty years her senior. He was charming and intelligent, and a very competent conductor and had been a pupil of Weingartner but was a considerable rogue in money matters. The members of his orchestra rarely got paid, and there were innumerable stories about bounced cheques. Constant, in a generous moment in the Nest, cashed him a cheque for £5, and was annoyed to discover afterwards that Charlie had spent the money, not on wine, women and song, but on going to a psychiatrist to find out why he had given Constant a bouncer. Constant, prompted by Searle, composed a rhyme on the subject:

How pleasant to know Mr. Brill
The most charming of any of his sex;
Such people as bear him ill-will
Are those who receive his dud cheques.

Nevertheless Charlie and El were happily married until his death twenty years later, and they had one daughter.

Eric Blom had asked Searle to write a book on Liszt for the Master Musicians series. After some thought, he turned it down, since half the book was expected to be yet another biography of Liszt and he wanted to write a book entirely about his music. However H. C. Colles, then chief music critic of The Times, asked him to prepare a new complete catalogue of Liszt's works for the forthcoming supplementary Volume of Grove's Dictionary which he did and it was published in 1940. It appeared again, revised and renumbered in Grove 5 in 1954 and for Grove 6 it was castrated and shorn of much necessary material. When Humphrey asked Colles about a fee he said airily: "Oh, we have a

gentleman's agreement and I'm sure that I'll keep mine with you better than Mussolini will keep his with Chamberlain". Needless to say, neither of them did.

Chapter five

On 1 September 1939 Hitler invaded Poland.

Humphrey had been told by the BBC that he would not be needed by them in the event of war. He was just 24 at the time. The BBC Music and Variety Departments decamped in great haste to Bristol, hoping for safety from the bombers. This turned out to be an unwise move as Bristol was bombed long before London was. Searle was left in London with nothing to do, and more important, no money. The BBC had promised to pay his salary until he joined the Forces, and then to bring it up to the BBC level, if his army pay was less than that. But owing to the disorganisation, no money was forthcoming for a long time, and things became very difficult. He moved with the Brills into an enormous flat in Belsize Park Gardens, Hampstead. The winter was very cold and it snowed continuously, making it impossible to heat the vast rooms. Here he wrote his first twelve-note pieces, a set of piano variations, vaguely based on the van Dieren piano variations, and a string quartet, which paid homage to Schoenberg, Berg and Webern in turn. At that time, there was a musical club called the M. M., Mainly Musicians, but curiously enough the proprietor's name was May Mukle, who was the cellist. This club was in Argyll Street near Oxford Circus, which put on occasional concerts. A programme of Searle's works was given there in the winter of 1939-40 with the singer John McKenna, the pianist and harpsichordist was Daphne Blackwall and the MacNaghten String Quartet. The programme included, as well as earlier works, the piano variations, the string quartet and the 1935 songs. The concert was well received, though the Times critic wrote, "This is the story of a young man who has taken the wrong turning, meaning twelve-note music." However, Edward Clark, who went to the concert, particularly liked just those twelve-note works.

In order to get permission for the performance of the two Chamber Music songs of 1935, Humphrey wrote to the poet James Joyce who was living in the Allier district of France, so communication was possible in spite of the war. His reply was typical

Hotel de la Paix,

S. Geraud - Le Puy (Allier)

13. 2. 40.

Dear Sir.

You have my consent to set the poems you mention but subject to the permission of Messrs Faber and Faber, publishers, holders of the copyright. As it will not be possible for me to be present at your concert (to which however I wish all good success) perhaps your near neighbour and my good friend Mr. F. S. Budgen (39 Belsize Square, - N. W. 3.) might go, if invited, and write me afterwards. The curious similarity of your two addresses has suggested this idea.

For the moment please do not send any music in MS. When, and if, your songs are printed I shall be glad and grateful to have a copy.

Sincerely yours,

James Joyce.

These songs were considered lost but I found a yellow copy, edited them and Judith Buckle has recorded them.

Searle was living at 39 Belsize Park Gardens. He hastened to see Frank Budgen, a lifelong friend of Joyce's who had already written a biography of him. He was a painter, and professed to have no knowledge of music, though he seemed happy about my settings of the poems. He was a charming man of tough physique who looked more like a sailor than an artist. Humphrey saw him from time to time until his death. He lived to be well over eighty.

Another resident of Belsize Park Gardens was the painter Michael Ayrton, who was living at the flat of his mother, Barbara Ayrton Gould. Michael came from a brilliant family. His father, the poet and writer, Gerald Gould, had died before the war and his mother had become a Labour M. P. and, at one time was Chairman of the Labour Party. Michael had just come back from Paris at the age of 18 and thought he knew everything. In fact, he was almost intolerable, as he himself admitted years later. But he had a brilliant mind and was already a very good painter and became an admirable sculptor, writer and broadcaster, and a much nicer person. He and Searle remained good friends throughout his too short life.

Charlie Brill was musical director to the Boulting Brothers, who were starting their film career and were, as yet, more or less unknown. He asked Humphrey to collaborate with him on scores for two films, a detective story starring Elizabeth Allan, and Pastor Hall, based on a play by the German left-wing writer Ernst Toller. This was a dramatised version of the life of Pastor Niemoeller, who had commanded a submarine in the First World War, but had refused to collaborate with the Nazis or to let them interfere with his congregation. For this, he was imprisoned by the Nazis, although he was not a Jew. Searle had met Toller at the Cafe Royal on Toller's way from Germany to America just before the war. Many would meet in the evenings in the downstairs cafe, where you were allowed to drink till midnight provided you had something to eat. This was usually known as the rubber sandwich, as it was passed round from one member of the party to the other. Humphrey liked the Toller script and wrote a certain amount of music for it, partly based on the chorale Ein Feste Burg.

Before he could finish the score, he was summoned to Bristol by the BBC, and never saw the film when it was released. He wrote to the Boultings about his fee, and discovered that they had paid Charlie, but Charlie had not paid Humphrey. He might have guessed that, but supposed the experience was useful.

Life was not always peaceful in the Brill household. They were both excitable people, and on one particular occasion they were having a violent quarrel, shouting, screaming, and chasing each other round and round the room. In the middle of this domestic upheaval sat Alec Whittaker, the first oboist in the BBC Symphony Orchestra and a tough-talking Yorkshireman, with Searle, both drinking quietly. Alec was completely drunk. Disregarding the circling Brills, he raised his glass and solemnly said, "Let us drink a toast. To the British Empire!"

After Christmas, the BBC Music Department suggested that, as the army had no use for Humphrey until March, he should join them in Bristol. There he found not only musical colleagues but many members of the BBC Variety Department, and shared amusing times in the Victoria pub in Clifton. Also living in Bristol were Alan Rawsthorne and his first wife Jessie Hinchliffe, who was a violinist in the BBC Symphony Orchestra. They shared a studio with Hyam (Bumps) Greenbaum and his wife Sidonie Goossens, one of the harpists in the orchestra. Searle had met Alan in London and had been at the first performance of his first piano concerto in the version for piano, strings and percussion, which was given in an enterprising series of concerts organized by the South African pianist Adolph Hallis. Humphrey liked it very much.

Alan, though exactly the same age as Constant, had taken a far longer time to achieve recognition. However his Variations for Two Violins had made his reputation, and so had his Symphonic Studies for Orchestra, which were given at the Warsaw ISCM Festival in 1939. Searle had not known Alan very well in London, but now got to know him much better. He, Jessie, Bumps and Sidonie would often meet their friends in the Llandoger-Trow, an ancient pub opposite the equally ancient Theatre Royal in the lower part of Bristol and Alan remained a good friend to the end of his life.

Bumps and Humphrey had met over the abortive production of *The Tailor* at Oxford in 1936. Television had been closed down on the outbreak of war, and he was made conductor of the BBC Variety Orchestra. Bumps was an extraordinarily gifted man who could conduct anything, from Schoenberg to Duke Ellington, but he never made a real name for himself. He was a most amusing companion. Searle regretted his loss sincerely, for he died young during the war at Bangor, where the Variety Department had been transferred. His much younger sister Kyla later became a fine concert pianist. Humphrey continued to see Jessie for many years and also saw Sidonie from time to time and she had not lost her warmth and sweetness of nature.

While in Bristol, he went to the first and only performance of Alan's *Kubla Khan*, which was written for the BBC's Overseas Service and was performed in their Bristol studios. It was for chorus and strings, with two soloists. Searle thought it was a very fine work, and the only reason it was never performed again was that the score and parts were destroyed in an air raid on Bristol. Alan's whole studio went up in flames, and lost most of his possessions. Humphrey always hoped that Alan would write the score again, but he never did. Searle had begun to sketch a setting of the poem himself before the war, but put it aside, and did not feel like taking it up again till after Alan's death but made a new setting in 1974.

The BBC had arranged lodgings for him in a house quite near their studios which house belonged to a pleasant couple who, however, wanted him to drink cups of tea and chat with him in the evenings, when he was trying to work on a symphony which was to include his 1935 overture in its last movement. They felt he was being standoffish, but he could only compose in his spare time. So he was glad when he was asked by John Davenport to stay in his house at Marshfield outside Bristol. He had met John through Frida van Dieren in London. John was basically a writer, but he had an enormous knowledge of all the other arts and talked as if he had complete control of all contemporary artistic activities. He was a short, powerfully built man, with a terrible temper when roused, but was normally charming and affable. He had recently returned from Hollywood, where he had earned some money writing film scripts, and these funds he invested in a large Cotswold stone house in Marshfield, a village about twelve miles east of Bristol. He had a tall, beautiful wife from New England called Clement and they had just had a baby daughter, Natalie.

John's house was so large that he let rooms out to his friends as paying guests. These included William Glock, then a pianist who had been as pupil of Schnabel and he was also a musicologist, and later successively music critic of *The Observer* and Head of Music at the BBC. There was also the composers Lennox Berkeley and Arnold Cooke, the musicologist Henry Boys and Dylan and Caitlin Thomas, who came later. Living in the same village were the painter Robert Buhler and the novelist Antonia White who wrote *Frost in May*. This was a lively party, and one can only guess how Clement coped.

Humphrey used to go into Bristol by bus every day during the week and in the evenings went across the road to the local pub. Here he sometimes used to play the piano, and Caitlin, who looked like an Irish fairy with her long golden hair, would dance wildly to Liszt's *Les Preludes* and a few other pieces that Searle knew by heart. During the day, Dylan and John were closeted together, working on a detective story *The Death of the King's Canary*, which took time to be published recently because of its libellous remarks about living people.

This was an idyllic and amusing existence, especially in wartime, but it could not last for ever. Humphrey had to register for the Army, and, in April, he was told to present himself at Horfield Barracks, Bristol, the depot of the Gloucestershire Regiment. Hitler had invaded Denmark and Norway, but his blitzkrieg in France had not yet begun.

Searle handed over the unfinished score of his symphony to Lennox, who kindly undertook to complete the orchestration. Humphrey's mother saw to it that her son's things were rescued from the Brills' London flat, except for his piano, which was the recipient of a great deal of beer at parties during the war, though it survived

The Marshfield period, though short, saw the start of many friendships such as those with Lennox Berkeley, Arnold Cooke and William Glock have lasted all of Searle's life and those friendships with John Davenport and Dylan Thomas until their deaths. A few months after Humphrey left, the household split up. William Glock and Clement Davenport went off together. John became successively Head of the Belgian Section of the BBC and literary critic of the Observer. Lennox joined the music department of the BBC and Arnold Cooke went into the Forces. But Humphrey was able to keep in touch with them periodically, as he was stationed in the army in Bristol for the next few months.

Chapter Six

Horfield Barracks had originally been a prison, and Searle had visited it with the BBC Men's Chorus for a concert before his induction into the army. He had played at soldiers at school, but, of course, knew little about the real thing. He found that the atmosphere in the army tough, but not unpleasant. Everyone was all in it together and fellow-soldiers mucked in and laughed at what could be laughed at. He was very glad to know the sort of people he had never been allowed to meet at school in Oxford and this gave him a much better understanding of life, and he was always grateful for this. The soldiers used to drink in pubs and play darts in the evenings and this was still allowed out up to the time of Dunkirk, and Humphrey was able to keep in touch with his BBC and other friends.

After a spell at Horfield, the unit was were moved to Eastville Park, where they camped out in tents and, luckily, the weather was marvellous. Searle had no intention of applying for a commission as he was quite happy in the ranks, but he did not want to stay as an infantryman for ever, and could not get into an army band as he played no orchestral instrument. He had heard that there was a regiment called the Field Security Police where languages were needed, and which might perhaps have enabled him to go to France. So he applied for a transfer and, meanwhile, continued his basic training at Eastville. The war had still not really begun for them. One day, while they were solemnly slow marching round the square, a plane appeared overhead and circled about for quite some time. Eventually the AA battery on the hill above realised it was not British and fired at it. The plane, in panic, dropped its bombs, luckily wide of the camp, and made off as fast as it could. Shades of Dad's Army?

After Dunkirk, Searle's unit took in a large number of soldiers who had been evacuated from the beaches, and he had to stay up all night recording their names before they could be sent on the leave which they thoroughly deserved. Shortly after this, the company was moved elsewhere and he was given a job in the camp office pending his transfer to the Intelligence Corps depot at Winchester. This proved to be in King Alfred's College, a teachers' training college of which, oddly enough, Grandfather Searle had been Vice-Principal of at one time. Here the discipline was much stricter than at Bristol. The Gloucesters were a fine fighting regiment, could afford to dispense with a lot of bullshit, but the Army evidently thought that the Intelligence Corps consisted of a bunch of formerly long-haired intellectuals who had to be licked into shape. So the company were drilled by Guards

NCOs and made to blanco everything in sight. Occasionally, they were allowed out in the evenings, but all leave had been stopped because of the threat of invasion, and Humphrey did not even get permission to go to London for the day to attend his brother Michael's wedding, to Margaret Poole from Beckley.

The training at Winchester was fairly short, and at the end of August, the squad were posted to various units. As Searle could speak reasonable French and German, he was naturally sent to the Highlands of Scotland where the only language of any use was Gaelic. His father had a similar experience when he was recalled to the Civil Service on the outbreak of war. As he knew Burmese well, and was indeed compiling a Burmese dictionary, he was, of course, sent up to Lytham St. Anne's, Lancashire to be put in charge of rationing petrol. In the end, Humphrey's posting proved a blessing in disguise, but he was not to know this at the time. The summer of 1940 had been exceptionally fine, but when his little band of six or seven reached Fort William it was pouring with rain which it continued to do for most of the eighteen months that he remained there. However, the air was good, the local people were warm and friendly, and the scenery, when one could see it, was spectacular.

His unit consisted of ten lance-corporals, mainly lowland Scots, two sergeants and an officer, the latter was Major Gavin Brown, who had been a master at Stowe and was a highly intelligent man. The unit were not policemen in the sense of controlling traffic or throwing people into jail, but their job was to preserve the security of a number of camps in the area between Fort William and Mallaig. This had been declared a Protected Area, and even the local residents were not allowed in and out without a pass. The reason for all this security was kept secret. The cover story was that the camps were for training commandos, and there was indeed a big commando training camp at Lochailort while at the other, smaller camps, similar training was given to a different kind of troops. The difference was that the trainees at these other camps were foreign soldiers who needed toughening up before being returned by parachute to their own occupied countries to organize resistance, propaganda and sabotage under the auspices of S. O. E. Special Operations Executive. These so-called students were not allowed out of the camps and could only be seen on their arduous exercises climbing the mountains.

It was a sparsely populated area, and the presence of strangers was easily noticed. The job was to control the number of people who were allowed to visit the camps and to look out for anything suspicious. The headquarters were in Fort William, and the section was scattered among various camps along the Mallaig Road which some could only be reached by boat. There was some motor-cycle training at Winchester, and the company was equipped with motor-cycles to patrol the area.

Once a week, the squad all rode into Fort William for a conference and to draw their pay. The basic rate for a private soldier was then two shillings a day. As much of the road had not been metalled and consisted of boulders surrounded by mud and so was a somewhat hazardous experience for motor-cyclists who were inexperienced.

At first, Humphrey was stationed at Lochailort, perhaps the toughest commando training centre in Britain. The trainees had to accomplish endless climbs in full equipment up and down sodden mountains in pouring rain, as well as rope-climbing, assault courses, weapon training and various other strenuous activities. Among the distinguished men who passed through its courses were Lord Lovat, of the Lovat Scouts, Gavin Maxwell who wrote *Ring of Bright Water* and David Niven but, as they were officers, Searle could not meet them. Humphrey had another Field Security man, Stevie, a former schoolmaster from Glasgow and their chief duties were to meet the local train which arrived from Glasgow once a day and to see if there was anybody suspicious on it, and to check security in general. The camp consisted of the Castle, which was a large country-house where the officers were quartered, and a number of tents with duck boards on the mud for the other ranks. Luckily, Searle and a colleague managed to get a small room in the hut which housed the NAAFI, and so were able to escape the worst of the rain and did not have to undergo commando training. In fact, nobody else

in the camp had much idea why they were there and remained aloof and mysterious and even to keeping rooms locked on the pretext that it contained secret papers.

Apart from the camp, the village of Lochailort consisted literally of the railway station, a hotel and a small shop and there did not seem to be any local inhabitants. The hotel was run by a formidable-looking lady called Williamina Maclean, who, in fact, belied her appearance and was warm and generous. Humphrey sometimes went to the back bar, mostly frequented by Irish labourers who were working in the camp who invariably drank spirits with chasers, whisky and beer, gin and beer and when the whisky ran out, finally sherry and beer. There was indeed a shortage of Scotch, as it was all exported to America, and on Searle's first visit to the famous West Highland Hotel at Mallaig, he was disappointed to find the only whisky they had was Canadian Rye.

There was little to amuse them in leisure time, but occasionally dances were held in the village hall in Arisaig, near Lochailort. These dances usually started at dusk and ended at dawn, as the girls had to walk long distances over the mountains to get to them. They played the traditional Highland dances, which gave Searle the idea of writing a suite on Highland tunes, and there was also modern jazz. Some of the fisher girls came over from Fraserburgh on the east coast and one of them used to perform an energetic sort of jiving act with Humphrey which astonished his fellow-soldiers. He sometimes found a partner with whom he could dance well.

The estate manager at Lochailort, Mr. Cox, was still living in his house near the castle in the middle of the camp. He, his wife and family often welcomed Stevie and Searle into his home for tea, scones and conversation in the evenings, especially on the nights when they were on guard duty at the castle. He once took Searle deer-stalking. He went, not because he wanted to shoot stags, but hoped to see these beautiful animals in their natural surroundings. However, the deer got wind of the hunters a mile away and soon disappeared.

As he was now in a more or less settled position, Humphrey was able to think about writing music again. He sketched out a rather Bartokian Music for Piano, Strings and Percussion, and then a less Bartokian and more individual Suite for string orchestra known as being in G published by Joseph Williams who were taken over by Stainer and Bell and now appears to be lost. He still lacked confidence as a composer, particularly as there was nobody to whom he could show his work, but he felt that he had made a break-through with the Suite, and it is called Op 1. It does not rely so heavily on other composers as his earlier works, and it had quite a success when it was performed in London during the middle of the war. The money for this concert had been put up by Rodney Phillips' brother Ian. The programme, which was given in the Wigmore Hall, also included Webern's orchestration of Bach's Ricercare from the Musical Offering, not often played in those days, Mahler's Kindertotenlieder and Beethoven's 4th symphony with only a small body of strings. The conductor was Walter Goehr.

Goehr had been a pupil of Schoenberg in Berlin in the 1920s. He came to England in 1933 with his wife and their infant son Alexander, who became one of Britain's leading composers and Professor of Music at Cambridge. Walter Goehr was offered a job at Morley College where he gave some enterprising concerts. In England, he was generally better known as a conductor than a composer. However, he used to give virtuoso performances once a week on the BBC radio show *Marching On*. This was a dramatisation of events as they occurred and went on the air at 7 p. m. Early in the day, Walter would arrive in the studio, learn what events were to be presented, write suitable music for them, score it, have it copied, rehearse it and conduct it that evening. He made a certain amount of money out of this, with which he generously financed concerts of contemporary music at a time when no one else, including the BBC, dared to do such a thing.

Back in Scotland, Humphrey had lost his room in the hut over the NAAFI, and had to sleep on a camp bed in one of Mr. Cox's outhouses, which was at least dry, if rat-infested. He had been made

an acting sergeant, which meant that he could use the sergeants' mess, and, shortly afterwards, he was moved to Arisaig House, a fairly modern mansion which stood on a hill outside the village. This was more pleasant than Lochailort, and so was the Arisaig Hotel which belonged to members of the Macdonald family. Lochailort was in Cameron country and the laird, then away in the army, was a Cameron. He returned to Lochailort when his aged mother died. She was given a full Highland funeral, with the eerie sound of the piper's pibroch echoing round the mountains. The laird also arranged a communal netting of a small loch on the estate which contained a large quantity of salmon trout. The catch was supposed to be delivered to the laird, who had the fish sold in London, but a good many salmon trout found their way into the heather, whence they were retrieved after dark and the whole neighbourhood lived on this splendid fish for some considerable time.

His Field Security colleagues and Humphrey were sometimes sent to meet parties of students in Glasgow who came up on the evening train from London. They were taken to a hostel for the night, and escorted on the 5. 50 a. m. train from Glasgow up to the destinations beyond Fort William. Fortunately, this was about the only train in the country which kept a restaurant car going in wartime and a fairly substantial breakfast appeared about 8 a. m. there was general jubilation. These trips meant that Searle could sometimes see friends in Glasgow, including, on one occasion, Sir Adrian Boulton, who was conducting there and invited him to supper in the Station Hotel before the students' train arrived.

Nevertheless, Humphrey was becoming rather bored with his circumstances, though they were not too unpleasant, and he felt that he ought to be doing something more active. There was no possibility of promotion within his unit, so he felt he had to apply for a commission. He went to Inverness for an interview, and in due course was told to proceed to a Transit Camp at the Great Central Hotel opposite Marylebone Station in London. The hotel was filled with a large crowd of NCOs and private soldiers all wondering what was going to happen next. Eventually, word spread through the grapevine that the unit were going to be sent to India for officer training there. Again Humphrey felt that he ought to use such French and German as he had. Fortunately, the headquarters of SOE was just round the corner in Baker Street. Searle went there and asked to speak to a friendly colonel whom he had frequently met on his visits to the training camps in Scotland. Humphrey explained the situation and there were a few telephone calls, and, in due course, he was given a commission as an instructor in SOE.

He was first sent on a course at their finishing school near Beaulieu in Hampshire. This was concerned with the usual paraphernalia of spying—codes, secret inks, disguises, contacting agents, cover stories, and also the writing of propaganda leaflets, for which his instructor was the writer Paul Dehn. But, after a few weeks, Searle was sent as an instructor to one of the preliminary training schools, the first school through which the students went on entering the service, before their toughening-up period in Scotland. The subjects here were map-reading, weapon training, fieldcraft, wireless transmission, P. T., explosives and Silent Killing. He knew something of these already and had to pick up the rest as he went along. Fortunately, there were excellent manuals to guide them and they did not have to spend any time on parades. The courses were short and designed to give the students the minimum requirements that they would need when living as agents in occupied countries. Their objects were to organize resistance movements, to collect intelligence and to do propaganda and sabotage. The students came from all the Allied countries, many of them having escaped with great difficulty from their homelands and they were brave men and women who had volunteered to undertake a very hard and dangerous task, and Humphrey had a tremendous respect for them.

The students who came to Searle's school, which was held in a large country house near Wokingham, were mostly French. SOE had two French sections. One was the Anglo-French section under Colonel Buckmaster, which sent over such well-known agents as Odette Churchill and Captain Yeo-Thomas known as The White Rabbit. These were mostly people who were bilingual in English and French or were of dual nationality. The other section comprised the De Gaulle French under Colonel Passy,

who took his pseudonym from a station on the Paris Metro, and these were the ones with whom Humphrey was mostly concerned. They were Frenchmen who had escaped from Occupied France, usually via Spain and Algiers, and very few of them spoke any English and so Searle's French came in useful after all. One exception was a middle-aged man, Louis Burdet, who owned a hotel in St. James's who Searle met again after the war following his appearance in a TV quiz show, Find the Link, in which he publicly stated that the training at the school had saved his life. He organized the resistance in the Marseille area under the name of M. Circumference. These French men and women came from all parts of France, from Lille to the Pyrenees, and from all walks of life. Their politics varied from extreme Right to Communist, but they were all solidly behind De Gaulle, whom they felt was the one man who could save their country, and they appreciated the British efforts in training them for the work they were-going to do.

Humphrey's C. O. was Major J. H. Dumbrell, a regular officer from the Royal Sussex Regiment who had served in the First World War as a very young man. He was quiet and reserved, and his manner was very pleasant. He left Searle to look after the training of the students without interference, though naturally the major's advice was required on important decisions and he concerned himself with the administrative side of the school, which entailed dealing with endless correspondence and demands from Headquarters in London. Humphrey was with him for more than two years altogether, and they always got on well. Humphrey's Piano Concerto no 1 is dedicated to him.

Silent Killing was a pared-down form of the Unarmed Combat which was taught to most Army units at that time. It was an earlier version of what is now known as karate. But it was not suitable to waste students' time on elaborate passes, throwing people over one's head, etc. What they required to know was how to defend themselves without weapons and if necessary, how to knock out a sentry who was guarding a target such as a power station, which was ordered to be put out of action. The visiting instructors in this art were two ex-Shanghai policemen, then in their sixties who had silver hair, were soft-spoken and looked like bishops. Their training, though simple, was very efficient, and Humphrey was sure that many of their students owed their lives to it.

As there were regular training schedules which took up the whole day, but not the evenings, except when there were night exercises, the unit often used to go to the Railway Inn at Wokingham after supper. This was run by a large and cheerful Cockney called Stanley and his much younger, pretty wife Anne. Here there was always amusing conversation and usually quite a crowd of people. Winston Churchill's daughter Mary used to look in sometimes since she was stationed down the road as an ATS. Stanley had been on the Stock Exchange before the war and was then living at Surbiton. One night, he went into the bar at Waterloo Station for a quick drink before catching his train, when a sailor walked in with a monkey who was wearing a black and yellow check suit. The sailor ordered two half-pints of beer and drank one and the monkey drank the other. Intrigued, Stanley got into conversation with the sailor and offered to buy the monkey from him. At first, the sailor was indignant - "E's me pal; we've been all round the world together" but he did eventually sell him to Stanley for £5. Stanley and the monkey walked off hand-in-paw. Stanley bought a dog ticket for him but was stopped at the barrier - "That ain't no dawg", and so the monkey was registered as "cattle". They boarded the train which stopped once before Surbiton. Here a man got in wearing a bowler hat. "I love monkeys", he said, whereupon the monkey seized his hat, tore off the brim and handed it back. On arrival at Surbiton, Stanley and the monkey went through the barrier, arm in arm. When they had walked some distance, the ticket collector shouted after them: "'Ere, one of you 'asn't given up 'is ticket".

Humphrey also had some time for writing music, and there was a piano in the house. His Op. 2, Night Music, was written at this time. Its style was suggested by Webern's orchestration of the Bach Ricercare which he had heard at Walter Goehr's concert, and it was intended as a tribute to Webern on his 60th birthday in 1943, though, of course, he was unable to send him a score of it during the war. Though not a twelve-note work, it was more or less atonal and was scored transparently for a

smallish chamber orchestra. It is basically reflective and expertly scored and in a coherent form. It was performed in 1944 at one of the first concerts of the newly-formed Society for the Promotion of New Music, which has done so much over the years to discover and help young composers. The concert took place in the Royal College of Music. Constant Lambert conducted, annoying the College authorities by insisting on smoking throughout the rehearsals, and there was a large and distinguished audience, including Vaughan Williams, who was always interested in hearing what the younger composers were doing. The performance made quite an impact, and Humphrey began to get requests to write pieces, for instance a piano piece, *Vigil* (France 1940-1944) Op 3 for an album in honour of the French Resistance Forces, a very suitable task in this case. This piece may be thought to be reminiscent of Satie's *Gymnopédies* but has a simple but effective theme and rich harmonies. It is both atmospheric and impressive.

Instructors were naturally expected to do all the jobs the students had to do, and this included parachuting. Humphrey was sent on a course to Wilmslow, outside Manchester, near Ringway airport and given a severe stint of physical training to make muscles flexible, and also detailed instructions on how to fall out of a plane and the right way to land. In the evenings, the instructors went to the local pub and had some amusing conversations with members of the Hallé Orchestra, including their principal clarinettist, Pat Ryan. But as the day of Searle's first jump approached, he was full of foreboding and thought that his last hour had come, especially as on the landing ground he had seen several Roman Candles that is to say men whose parachutes had got their cords twisted and did not open. They jumped from only 300 feet to give the enemy less time in which to shoot at a descending agent and rip-cords were attached to the plane, so that the parachutes were supposed to open automatically. They jumped through a hole in the floor in those days, and the first jump was from a balloon which, since the ground could be seen all the time which was worse than jumping from a plane. However, they had been so well drilled that when the time came to jump, they went automatically on the word of command. When Searle hit the fresh air he had a feeling of immense relief, and floated down in supreme happiness. But only for twenty seconds, jumpers had to concentrate on avoiding any injury on landing, especially if there was a wind. However, Humphrey enjoyed his initial four jumps so much that he later voluntarily returned for another course of four, three of them in one afternoon.

He was told a story at this time about a Polish officer who was being parachuted into his native land to organize the Resistance there. Just before the jump, he drew himself up to his full height, saluted smartly, and before disappearing through the hole exclaimed: "And if we see us not again, Allo!"

Eventually, the entire staff of the school moved to another country house near Market Harborough in Leicestershire. This was further from London, of course, but the house had a lake which contained pike, and our cook who, though a Frenchman, was a British army sergeant, would often make splendid meals from this tasty if bony fish. The famous John Fothergill, author of *An Innkeeper's Diary*, dating from the days when he was the proprietor of the Spread Eagle at Thame in Oxfordshire, a hotel much frequented by Oxford undergraduates in Evelyn Waugh's day, had taken over the Three Swans in Market Harborough, and the school was anxious to try out the fare provided by this legendary figure. Unfortunately, owing to wartime restrictions, the best he was able to produce was a variety of different kinds of risotto containing mostly spam and other tinned food known as Mr. Fothergill's Special, the waiter said. But, in the circumstances, one could hardly complain.

Boosey and Hawkes, the music publishers, put on some concerts of contemporary music in London, and Humphrey was asked to write a piece for string orchestra for one of these concerts and to be played by the famous Boyd Neel Orchestra, which did so much for modern British music at that time. He wrote an *Ostinato* which later became the first movement of the second string suite. The performance went very well and attracted quite a lot of attention. His C. O. was also kind enough to allow him to work on the piano concerto on the mess piano in the evenings after training, though he must have suffered considerably from the noises that were made. This was partly a reworking of two

pieces Humphrey had sketched out before the war, and though the Concerto was later played at the Proms and elsewhere he was never been happy with it. Unlike Berlioz, it is a mistake to attempt to rehash earlier works.

Meanwhile, training courses at the school continued and from time to time volunteers for overseas operations were called for. Humphrey invariably applied for these, but was never accepted, so he supposed that he was needed as an instructor. When D-Day came, the French Resistance blew up all the railway lines leading to the invasion front, thereby preventing the Germans from moving supplies and so Humphrey and his colleagues could feel that their contribution to the war effort had been worth while in the end. As more European countries were liberated, SOE operations naturally became more limited, but Searle remained at the Leicestershire house until early in 1945, when he was sent back to his original school near Wokingham, this time with a different C. O., to train some anti-Nazi Germans who were to help in liberating the prisoner-of-war camps in Germany and Humphrey was there when the war in Europe ended.

Obviously, SOE's work was now over, and staff were all transferred to other units. Humphrey was given some language tests, in which he apparently did better in German than French, but the French text was an extremely complicated piece about the technical side of railways. He was sent to the Intelligence Corps HQ to await posting to Germany. The HQ had now moved from Winchester to Wentworth Woodhouse, an enormous 18th-century mansion on the outskirts of Rotherham, Yorkshire, which belonged to Lord Fitzwilliam, and indeed the earl's mother was still living in part of the premises. Unfortunately, the beautifully landscaped garden was almost completely spoilt by opencast mining, but Humphrey was glad to have been there for a short time before his next move.

Chapter seven

The troop train clanked ponderously across an insecure-looking Rhine bridge which was hastily constructed by the Royal Engineers and the train eventually deposited Searle's unit at Rhine Army HQ. This was in August 1945, and the war with Japan was almost over. The HQ was situated in Bad Oeynhausen, a rather dreary little spa in the middle of the North German plain, made drearier by the fact that the entire German civilian population had been evacuated from it, and the town contained nothing but troops.

Humphrey was assigned to an office in HQ itself whose job was to track down the remnants of the Gestapo and 55 personnel who were still at large and to lock them up. Needless to say, most of them when caught, were released before long. The work entailed sorting out endless information obtained from German prisoners about the possible whereabouts of these people and passing it on to the various HQs of the various corps in whose territories the wanted men might be found, or, in certain cases, to the American and French Occupation Forces. There did seem to be much contact with the Russians. The work meant long hours, six days a week, but there was very little to do outside office hours, and Searle and his colleagues would visit the two cinemas in the town or mostly congregate in the mess, where German Steinhager gin cost two old pence a nip. This, if not actually lethal, was liable to cause severe hangovers.

Humphrey met up with Louis Burdet, the French Colonel in the Resistance who taught Humphrey elements of commando warfare.

Searle met some people he had known previously such as John Willett, a Winchester friend, who, later, became editor of the Times Literary Supplement, who was going on a mission to Vienna, and Humphrey gave him a letter to take to Webern, as civilian mail was more or less non-existent at that time. A few weeks later, Humphrey was appalled to receive a letter from John giving him the tragic

news of Webern's death. He had been shot by a trigger-happy American soldier. Searle was angry rather than upset and went straight back to his billet, which was freezingly cold, and began a piece which later became his Second Nocturne for chamber orchestra. Its opening theme expresses his feelings of protest. It seemed so absurd that this should happen to a man who was still at the height of his powers and was only 61. He was about to return to Vienna to undertake important work which would probably have changed the entire aspect of music in Vienna and the rest of the world.

Later in the year, Hitler's will was discovered by accident in the clothing of a German prisoner, and Humphrey was put in charge of the enquiries which followed. The Oxford historian, Hugh Trevor Roper, came over from the War Room in London from time to time to supervise the work, the results of which were later published in *The Last Days of Hitler*. The objective was to prove that Hitler really was dead, and to prevent the emergence of some kind of resurrection myth which might encourage the Nazis to try to seize power again. It was discovered that there had been two other copies of the will, and Searle and Trevor Roper were able to track down the two men who had taken them out of the Bunker at the time of Hitler's death. The Russians were not at all co-operative, and, as the Bunker was in the Russian sector of Berlin and enquiries were somewhat handicapped, especially as some of the main witnesses were in Russian hands. In fact, the Russian version of the story did not emerge until many years later. However, it was possible to assemble sufficient first-hand witnesses to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that Hitler and Eva Braun had committed suicide in the Bunker and that their bodies had been burned in the grounds. Meanwhile, Humphrey made English translations of Hitler's personal and political testaments and also of Goebbels's will, which had been smuggled out of the Bunker with the others and these were published in due course when the story broke towards the end of the year.

Searle and his companions did occasionally have some outside entertainment. The Sadler's Wells Opera visited during the winter, and Humphrey was able to meet some old friends in the company such as Elizabeth Abercrombie, Warwick Braithwaite and Trefor Jones. And Searle helped to organize some entertainments himself. At Christmas time, he put on a musical version of *East Lynne*, which his Oxford friend John Irvine produced and in which he also played the villain. Another Winchester friend, Anthony Smith-Masters, set the lyrics to splendid pastiches of Victorian tunes, and Humphrey wrote the incidental music for the scene changes and conducted a small orchestra in the pits. Bad Oeynhausen had a very pleasant medium-sized theatre which had not been bombed in the war. At first, the audience of soldiers was inclined to take the play so seriously that a claque had to be installed to hiss the villain and cheer the hero and heroine. They soon got the message and the last night was a riot.

In addition, Searle conducted some orchestral concerts and there were some Forces musicians whom he was able to supplement with players from a former German school of military music at nearby Buckeburg. Searle performed popular works, Beethoven's 5th, Schubert's Unfinished and a choral version of Strauss's *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, and also Bach's 5th Brandenburg Concerto, with an excellent officer colleague as piano soloist, and the three well-known pieces from Berlioz's *Damnation of Faust*. He also wrote a Highland Reel, based on tunes he had heard in Scotland during the war, and it had its first performance here. The concerts were invariably fully attended and the audiences enthusiastic, but Humphrey was severely reprimanded by the Control Commission for fraternising with the enemy. Apparently, it was an offence to form a joint Anglo-German orchestra!

He was demobilised in March 1946, and managed to visit some of his Antwerp relations on the way back to England. They seemed to have survived the war without too many deprivations, though their chateau at Mirwart had been severely damaged when the Germans occupied it. However, they failed to discover a cache of wine which Humphrey's cousin, Jules, had prudently buried under one of the towers. After six years, Searle was glad to be returning to civilian life, though his war service had been interesting in many ways and he was certainly luckier than many of his colleagues.

Chapter Eight

Humphrey's father had spent the last years of the war in London, having finally been transferred to the Burma Office. He was now due to retire to the country, so he let his son stay in the flat where he had been living, a basement apartment in Camberwell not far from where Aunt Elsie and her fellow-nuns had an establishment. This was not as depressing as it sounds, since it was quiet and clean and opposite an attractive small park. The only problem was transport, as Humphrey did not have a car then, though he had driven both before and during the war, and any way he had never liked driving in London. To get to Central London, he had to walk some distance to a bus which took him to the Oval, and then take two separate tube trains. Owing to the bombing of London, accommodation was extremely scarce, especially now that people were returning in large numbers to the capital, so he was fortunate to have somewhere to live.

The BBC had kept his old job open for him, but he did not particularly want to be a Chorus Librarian any more, so he applied for and got a job as a musical programme producer. This initially meant chamber music programmes, and some of these went out live at 9 am every week-day, which involved the wretched artists having to get to the studio for an 8 am balance test. He felt very sorry for them, especially the singers, at having to perform at such an unearthly hour. They were mostly artists who had just managed to get on to the books of the BBC and were maintaining a precarious position there. Searle looked in at these rehearsals every morning on his way to the office, but as he had about twelve recitals a week to look after, his production consisted of little more than drawing up the programmes over the telephone with the artists, seeing that various works were not repeated too often, and arranging for suitable programme notes to be provided for the announcers.

The BBC Music Department was in Marylebone High Street, in the office later occupied by the BBC Publications. Humphrey usually walked down to the George pub in Mortimer Street at lunchtime for a sandwich and a glass of beer and to meet his friends. When the Third Programme started in September 1946, his work became much more interesting, as the Third Programme music director, Anthony Lewis, later the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, encouraged all the BBC music producers to put forward ideas for rare and curious programmes. The opening of the Third Programme was, however, nearly disastrous for Humphrey.

Before the first concert in the large Maida Vale studio, the BBC provided a generous cocktail party. The second item in the programme was Purcell's ode, *Come, ye Sons of Art*, which contains the duet for two counter-tenors, *Sound the Trumpet*. When Searle's colleague Basil Lam witnessed two large men with black moustaches emitting long and extraordinarily castrated-sounding notes in this piece it was all the assembled company who could do to restrain laughter and avoid being thrown out.

In the very first week of the Third Programme, Humphrey put on a concert of rare orchestral works by Liszt, including the first English performance of *Les Morts*, which Liszt wrote in memory of his son Daniel, who was only twenty when he died, the song *Die Vatergruft*, the *Second Mephisto Waltz* and several other pieces. The conductor was Constant Lambert, and he was an able and willing collaborator in a number of programmes of unusual and exotic works over the next few years, a list of these can be found in Richard Shead's biography of him. Constant would conduct anything interesting, no matter in what style, though he was not keen on doing the standard Austro-German classics, and twelve-note music meant little to him. However, he did once conduct a broadcast of the *Bach-Webern Ricercare* when one of Schoenberg's pupils originally scheduled for the programme fell ill, and he told Humphrey afterwards how surprised he was when a score which looked so fragmentary on paper emerged so clearly in actual sound. These programmes were usually arranged over a drink in the George. It was no good writing Lambert letters, and he was hopeless on the telephone, but once he was actually present he was full of ideas and most stimulating.

Among other BBC performances of that time which Searle remembered were Beecham conducting Berlioz' s Requiem, a shattering sound, even in the big Maida Vale studio, and there was also a complete performance of The Trojans. This was probably the first English performance of the whole work, apart from Erik Chisholm's memorable production in Glasgow just before the war, although that was not wholly professional. The BBC engaged a cast of French singers but they were not particularly impressed by Beecham's conducting of the music since he probably did not know the score too well, until he came to the Royal Hunt and Storm, which, of course, he had conducted many times. Here they really sat up and took notice as his performance was terrific. Another notable event was Ravel's ballet Daphnis and Chloe, given complete with chorus under the well-loved conductor Pierre Monteux who obtained marvellous sonorities from both orchestra and singers. An example of his gentle humour occurred in one of the rehearsals when a trombone player, having a rest of 280 bars or so, took out the evening paper and started doing the crossword. Monteux stopped the orchestra and said: "Excuse me, please, Monsieur le Trombone - good news?"

The first post-war ISCM Festival was held in London in 1946. For this, the Austrian section sent over the scores of Webern's last three completed works, the First and Second Cantatas Op 29 and 31 and the Orchestral Variations Op 30. These had not yet been published, but Humphrey was able to see the scores and to write what is believed was the first article ever published about them in the now defunct Monthly Musical Record of December 1946. The jury chose the First Cantata for performance in the Festival, and its world premiere, with the Schoenberg pupil Karl Rankl as conductor and the Australian-born soprano Emelie Hooke as soloist which was a great success. Emelie Hooke was the only singer in the country who could cope with this kind of music. She was a very warm and friendly person who became a good friend to Searle for many years, and she was much mourned when she died.

Humphrey was seeing quite a lot of Edward Clark and his wife Elisabeth Lutyens at this time. Edward had included Searle's Night Music in a series of concerts of contemporary music he gave soon after the war, and Humphrey was interested in the programmes given by the London Contemporary Music Centre of which he was Chairman. The twelve-note composer, Rene Leibowitz, came over from Paris for a short stay. He was Polish-born and had studied with both Schoenberg and Webern and had written the first authoritative books on twelve-note music, Introduction a La Musique de Douze Sons, and Schoenberg et son Ecole, later translated by Dika Newlin as Schoenberg and his School. He had formed a group of twelve-note composers in Paris and was one of the teachers of Pierre Boulez. He had also formed an ensemble of soloists from the Paris Orchestre National which played twelve-note music. He came to hear Searle's Second Nocturne, which was being played at Sadler's Wells as an interlude in a ballet, of all things. He said that this was the most interesting piece he had heard in London, and asked Humphrey to write a strictly twelve-note work for his ensemble and the result the Intermezzo for 11 instruments which he dedicated to the memory of Webern and which contains a quotation from his Op 30. Leibowitz gave the first performance of this early in 1947 in Paris at a Festival de la Musique Dodecaphonique which, apart from works by Schoenberg, Berg and Webern, included compositions by Luigi Dallapiccola, Elisabeth Lutyens, Erich Itor Kahn, Leibowitz himself and his pupils Andre Casanova and Serge Nigg.

Searle was able to get him to give a broadcast of several of these works in the BBC studios in the following summer, when the Orchestre National was passing through London on the way to the Edinburgh Festival. Humphrey's BBC colleagues were most annoyed about this and felt that he had overdone things.

One of the BBC programmes which he asked Constant to do involved his conducting his Concerto for Piano and 7 instruments, a rather neglected work which is one of his best, though it is not easy to perform, and also to include performing the speaking part in the Sitwell-Walton Facade entertainment, of which he did several performances about that time. As all programmes still went out live, Humphrey asked Edith Sitwell to give a talk about the Facade poems in the interval while

Constant took a short but necessary rest. Searle was glad to meet her again, and she was kind enough to send him a copy of a collection of her poems which included *Gold Coast Customs*. He was absolutely bowled over by the powerful and savage imagery of this poem, and determined to make a setting of it for speaker, male chorus and a kind of enlarged jazz band consisting of woodwind, brass, two pianos, percussion and double basses. It took him two years to write as he could only compose at weekends and not always then, but he regarded it as the first of his large-scale twelve-note works.

The Third Programme was becoming somewhat solemn and esoteric. One planner is reputed to have deleted Brahms' 4th Symphony from a proposed programme as being merely a repertory work. Humphrey thought he might brighten it up by introducing some programmes of absurd or comic music. This led to a series called *Musical Curiosities* which ran for several years. There were three main kinds of music... parodies or pastiches such as Faure and Messager's *Quadrilles* on themes from Wagner's *Ring* or Chabrier's *Quadrilles* on themes from *Tristan* and works by people who were not normally thought of as composers, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Samuel Butler and Nietzsche. There were also pieces which were so bad as to be funny, like Bamby's *Rebecca* or Tolhurst's *Ruth*. Searle found some able collaborators in Constant Lambert and Alan Rawsthorne, who both came up with some brilliant suggestions, as well as E. J. Moeran, who wrote an excellent script for one programme. Unfortunately, Moeran was an alcoholic, which meant that though he often drank very little for months on end, but once he started drinking it was more or less impossible to stop him. In these programmes the authors of the scripts usually read their own texts Humphrey had a date to meet Jack Moeran at the George shortly before the preliminary rehearsal, and was alarmed to be told by Constant that Jack was in another pub down the road three sheets in the wind. The rehearsal was at 2, and the programme was due to go out live at 6 pm, so it was thought that, as four hours remained it was possible to sober him up. Searle had not reckoned, however, that he would be carrying a flask in his hip pocket. To let him go on the air in that state would have been disastrous but, fortunately, Humphrey managed to lose his spectacles temporarily, and the continuity announcer read the script.

Another collaborator was Sir Stewart Wilson, then BBC Head of Music. He unearthed some absurd potted biographies of composers, set to their own music, by an American lady called Floy Little Bartlett, and sang them in his best fruity manner. Searle also had a lot of help from his friend Richard Gorer, to whom he had been introduced by Michael Ayrton. The Gorers were a talented family but Humphrey never knew the father since he went down in the *Lusitania* in 1917. But Richard's mother Ree, was a talented painter and a friend of many artists and writers, including Edith Sitwell, who dedicated a poem, *Romance No. 7* of her *Early Poems*, to her. Of her three sons the eldest, Geoffrey, was a well-known anthropologist, the second, Peter, was an equally well-known pathologist who died too young, while the youngest, Richard, had a wide and esoteric knowledge of music, particularly Czech music, and was also an expert horticulturist. He suggested many works for the Third Programme, not only for *Musical Curiosities*, which were unknown but well worth performing, such as Marscher's incidental music to the *Goldsmith of Ulm*, and the symphonies of Fibich. He was the best man at both of Humphrey's weddings, and his piano *Ballade, Op 10*. is dedicated to him.

The 1947 ISCM Festival took place in Copenhagen, and Searle was sent there by the BBC, together with Kenneth Wright. This was the first time he had been out of England as a civilian since the war, and it was good to see all the food one had forgotten which still existed, such as fresh eggs and fish. The Danes were generous hosts, especially in the famous Tivoli Gardens, but much rather dreary Scandinavian music was played during the Festival.

However, Humphrey did make one discovery, the Norwegian composer Fartein Valen, who had developed an original atonal and lyrical style of his own. His *Sonetto di Michelangelo* was played in the Festival, and in Humphrey's report for *The Times* he described it as one of the outstanding works there. This apparently benefited Valen in Norway. He was a very shy and retiring man who lived the life of a recluse somewhere on the west coast, with practically no recognition from his fellow-countrymen. He wrote to Humphrey later that this article had brought him respect where previously

he had only had hatred and abuse. His violin concerto was played at the Amsterdam ISCM Festival in 1948, and Searle had the privilege of meeting him there. He died not long afterwards and, later, a Valen Society was formed to perform and record his works. Valen was one of the many composers Searle helped to establish.

Professor Edward Dent, who had been President of the ISCM since its foundation in the 1920s, retired after the war in favour of the music critic, Edwin Evans. However, Evans died shortly afterwards and Dent was persuaded to stay on till the 1947 Festival. But he made it clear that he definitely wished to retire. Edward Clark was elected President, and he asked Humphrey to be the General Secretary, which was of course an honour for him. For the moment it did not involve much work but chiefly consisted of answering correspondence from the different foreign sections, and he was able to do this by dictating letters in his office after BBC hours, when a girl took these letters down in shorthand and then typed them out.

He saw quite a lot of Michael Ayrton at this time as he and his first wife had a studio in All Soul's Place, round the corner from the BBC, and Constant also lodged there for a time. They occasionally put Humphrey up when it was too late for him to return to Camberwell. Constant would usually start work at midnight and carry on till 4 am, which explained why he was not at his best in the mornings. On one occasion, when he had obviously had a late night, Searle met him in the George about mid-day. Lambert was considerably alarmed when he saw a black and white dog's head apparently in mid air, looking through a skylight, and even more so when he turned to look at the wall clock and saw that its second hand was travelling backwards.

The Sadler's Wells Ballet performed at the New Theatre in Charing Cross Road before moving to Covent Garden, and Constant was on his way to conduct a matinee there, dressed in morning coat, cravat and striped trousers. He told Humphrey later that he found he was being pursued through the crowd by a little man whom he did not much like the look of and so he dodged into a pub. This turned out to be a bad move as the little man followed him in and the ensuing conversation took place:

Little Man: Excuse me sir, you are Hannen Swaffer, aren't you?

Constant: No, I'm not Hannen Swaffer,

Little Man: But Hannen Swaffer always wears a bow tie.

Constant: But I'm not wearing a bow tie.

Little Man: (sinisterly) So I see.

Another story which Constant told was of a time about 1930 when he was visiting the Sitwell home at Renishaw in Yorkshire. In the drawing-room a three-handed ladies' bridge party was taking place between Lady Ida, the mother of the three writers, a very proper Bostonian cousin, and a poor relation who was depending on staying in the house for the next two weeks. Osbert Sitwell and Constant were also there and, getting bored with the game, retired to the other end of the room where there was a piano, and Constant played Osbert his newly-written Rio Grande. When they returned to the ladies they heard the following remarks:

Bostonian Cousin: (rather affectedly) Oh how charming! It reminds me of Roger Quilter.

Poor Relation: Oh, I thought it was Corrrrto

Lady Ida: (waking up, menacingly) Did you say Wagner?

Poor Relation: Yes.

About this time there occurred the great attempt to rehabilitate Charlie Brill. Although in his forties, Charlie had been called up in the Army and posted to the RASC as a driver. He then suddenly decided

he was really a pacifist at heart, but instead of trying to thrash this out with the authorities, he simply deserted. Searle did not think that the army made much of an attempt to find him, for he returned to his wife's flat in London, grew a beard, and even published some articles under her maiden name as Charles Currie. When the war was over, he gave himself up and served a spell in Dartmoor. When he was released, Rudolf Messel, cousin of the designer Oliver Messel, decided to pay for some concerts in which Charlie would reappear as a conductor. As the Queen's Hall had been bombed and the Festival Hall had not yet been built, these took place in the Winter Garden Theatre. Its acoustics, though dry, were not impossible. There were three concerts in all, and Charlie included something of Humphrey's in each, Night Music in the first one, the Highland Reel in a concert of light music, and an orchestration of Liszt's Csardas Macabre which Humphrey made specially for the remaining concert which was a Liszt programme. The first half of this concert was conducted by Constant, and included the Second Mephisto Waltz and various rare works.

Charlie conducted the Faust Symphony in the second half. He was twittering with nerves, as the only chorus available for the choral finale was the London Police Choir. He insisted on Searle accompanying him to the preliminary chorus rehearsal with piano, which took place in a police station as he was afraid he might never be allowed out again.

The 1948 ISCM Festival took place in Amsterdam. Alan Rawsthorne and Gerry Schurmann, the Dutch composer who lived in England, came over with Humphrey and his colleagues, and Gerry saved some lives after the opening concert. This event was extremely long, and was followed by a reception at the Town Hall which consisted of interminable speeches in Dutch, after which everyone was given a cup of tea and a biscuit. Fortunately, Gerry knew a place where one could find something more interesting, even at that late hour of night.

A short piece of Humphrey's was played at this Festival was Put Away the Flutes for voice, flute, oboe and string quartet. This had been commissioned by Peter Pears, always a generous patron of young composers, and he gave the first performance of it on the BBC, though he was not able to do the Amsterdam performance. While Searle was stationed in Scotland during the war, his only link with the literary world was the weekly arrival of the New Statesman.

One week, he saw a poem in it called simply Song by W. R. Rodgers, of whom he had never heard, but he was determined to set it at a later date. It was a poem about the futility of war, and was afterwards printed in Rodger's collection, Europa and the Bull as Song for War. Later, Humphrey got to know Bertie Rodgers well when he was a producer in the BBC Features Department.

At the Amsterdam Festival, Edward Clark suddenly thought of a grandiose scheme. The ISCM Central Office in London already had a full-time secretary-typist, a Hungarian girl who knew French and German. Now he suggested that Searle should be engaged on a full-time paid basis instead of working voluntarily as before. The delegates agreed that he should be paid £10 a week, but nobody seemed to know where the money was to come from. Humphrey said he would take a chance on this and would give in his notice to the BBC although he had enjoyed the BBC and had performed a lot of interesting works, including music by some older composers who were unpopular at the time, such as Charles Ives, who was then still alive, and Janacek. There had also been an important series of programmes of British contemporary music, as well as works by Dallapiccola, Valen and other composers who represented the so-called avant-garde. But Searle was finding it practically impossible to write music, apart from office hours, which even included occasional Saturday mornings when had to go to recitals in the evenings to audition new performers and often had rehearsals and broadcasts at weekends as well. He felt that with the ISCM, he would have more time, though if the BBC had been willing to offer him a job on a part-time basis he would have been glad to stay on.

It was also getting difficult for Humphrey to live in Camberwell. BBC programmes were allowed to overrun as much as they liked in those days, and he was sometimes in the studio till 2 am, which meant that he had to ask friends who lived in Central London for a bed for the night, as the BBC would not pay for a hotel. In addition, he had been having an affair with a musician whom he had known before the war. She lived in the country, and he usually visited her there, but she came to London sometimes and he wanted to find somewhere where she could stay with Humphrey. So he was grateful when a pianist friend found a room for him in a house in St. John's Wood, and he moved there in June 1948. Like his posting to Scotland in the war, this move turned out to be a fateful one.

Chapter Nine

The room was again a basement, in a Victorian house, now demolished, in St. John's Wood Park which leads from Ordnance Hill to Swiss Cottage. However it was fairly spacious and had a view of the garden, though it was inclined to be on the damp side. It was immediately christened "The Aviary", after the celebrated limerick by one of Peter Warlock's circle:

A vice at once strange and unsavoury
Held the Bishop of Oxford in slavery;
Amid screeches and howls
He would bugger young owls
Which he kept in an underground aviary.

After moving in, Humphrey went out to explore the neighbourhood, and just down the road found a very agreeable pub called The Prince of Wales. He was, however, allowed to discover, after living for two years in an honest working district like Camberwell, that all the inhabitants of St. John's Wood apparently wore morning coats with cornflower buttonholes, striped trousers and grey top hats. He felt he would never be able to live up to this sartorial standard. His arrival had coincided with the Eton and Harrow cricket match at Lords!

The manageress of the pub was Rosie, a splendid Cockney lady who had previously worked in a circus as a slack wire artist; in fact, she had learnt by heart a speech in several languages assuring her audience that they were the very best folk she had ever played to and that she hoped for their attendance again the following night. Her personality made the Prince of Wales a meeting-place for people from all over London, and indeed the world. Some of Humphrey's BBC friends lived in the neighbourhood, two of them within a stone's throw of the pub. On one side was R. D. (Reggie) Smith, who had joined the BBC Features Department after the war from the British Council. His wife was the novelist Olivia Manning, who described their early relationship hilariously in her Balkan and Levant Trilogies and wrote further about Reggie in "My Husband Cartwright". On the other side lived Maurice Brown, also a BBC Features Producer, who made some memorable programmes about Gandhi, James Joyce and others, mostly in collaboration with W. R. Rodgers.

Mo Brown told Searle a typical story about Bertie Rodgers. When working on the Joyce programme in Dublin they shared a hotel room. Mo Brown woke up in the middle of the night to hear Bertie talking to himself: "A fine fellow you are now. Drunk again - and buying drinks, not just for yourself only, - no, for every Tom, Dick and Harry - dirty great foaming pints - passing them over the heads of the crowd - and you couldn't wait to walk there - oh no, had to take a taxi". Bertie had been a Protestant minister in Northern Ireland and occasionally suffered from such attacks of conscience. He left the BBC at the end of September, and began work at the ISCM office straight away. It soon became clear that, while enough money was coming in for the secretary-typist to be paid, there was not going to be sufficient for Humphrey's salary as well. The ISCM office depended entirely on subscriptions from the various country sections, and these often arrived in a most haphazard way.

The best payers were the East European countries, presumably subsidised by their governments; the worst were the so-called "rich" countries, Sweden, Switzerland and the U. S. A., whose country sections depended entirely on private patronage. Still, Searle was prepared to let things ride for the moment. He had received a lump sum from the BBC when he left them, and as he had officially been a member of their staff for ten years (six of which had been spent in the army) he was paid the sum due for the entire period. But he could foresee difficulties ahead. Meanwhile, the work was interesting, useful and not too exhausting; Edward Clark had excellent ideas and great experience, but he was not easy to work with. When a letter arrived from one of the foreign sections which required a decision Humphrey invariably asked Edward for his advice; sometimes he merely grunted, but if Searle took a decision himself he then accused Humphrey of going behind his back. The work also entailed organising concerts of the British section of the ISCM, the London Contemporary Music Centre, and for this particular season (1948-9) he had the support of the BBC; Sir Stewart Wilson made a generous offer which allowed Searle to choose the programmes and the BBC would provide the finance.

Humphrey's relations with his musical girl-friend had not been going too smoothly, and matters came to a head over, of all things, an Ascot geyser. He had been looking for a place where they might set up house together, and had found a house in St. John's Wood which was empty apart from a family occupying one floor. Though he had very little money, he was prepared to try and raise a mortgage to buy the place, which would not have been impossible in those days, but his friend flatly refused to move in as there was no Ascot geyser. So they parted.

About this time, Searle was introduced in Rosie's pub to a red-haired girl who mostly came in at week-ends. She was called Lesley Gray, and she worked as a Welfare Officer for the LCC (now GLC). She came from an Irish family; her father was a Protestant and her mother a Catholic, and this division of the family had led her to give up Christianity entirely and join the Communist party in the 1930s. She did this more because of its anti-Fascism and its social aims than anything else, and, in fact, she resigned from the party in 1943 because she could not accept their materialistic philosophy. For a time, she worked as an actress in the company of Nancy Price (usually known as Nancy Half-Price for obvious reasons) at the Little Theatre in London. During the war she had been an air-raid warden and her flat at Swiss Cottage had been destroyed by flooding, and the ARP had requisitioned for her a small flat at 44 Ordnance Hill, exactly opposite Rosie's pub.

Humphrey and Lesley soon became attracted to each other and thought about marriage. This was rather complicated as Lesley had been married before, at an early age, chiefly in order to get away from her family and home in Scotland. She had left her husband some time earlier, but he refused to give her a divorce. However she was fairly certain that he was already married at the time of going through the ceremony with her, and that her marriage to him was therefore invalid. Yet she was reluctant to start proceedings against him. Unfortunately, his name was a rather common one but a young lawyer friend of hers, Jack Geddes, undertook exhaustive researches into the possible first marriage, and eventually gave it as his legal opinion that there was no obstacle to Lesley getting married. This was not to happen until the summer of 1949.

Meanwhile, at her insistence, Humphrey spent most nights at her flat rather than in his damp basement, but kept this on for working in during the day. He was already only working part-time at the ISCM since no salary had yet been paid to him, and he wanted to finish Gold Coast Customs, for which he had been promised a performance the following May.

The Palermo ISCM Festival took place in April 1949. The Italian Radio were providing the orchestra, and the preliminary rehearsals took place in Rome. Edward Clark and Elisabeth Lutyens went directly to Palermo, and Searle's job was to supervise these rehearsals. This proved rather complicated, as no proper rehearsal schedule had been worked out, and all the conductors naturally wanted as much rehearsal time as possible; a Czech conductor who had been sent over to conduct a work by one of

his compatriots demanded eight rehearsals and then disappeared into the night. Fortunately, Humphrey was helped by Carlo Maria Giulini, then assistant conductor of the radio orchestra who was extremely practical and sensible and Searle was grateful to him ever since.

Humphrey was fascinated by Sicily, with its mixture of cultures ranging from Phoenician, Greek, Roman and Byzantine to Arab and Norman. He wished he and Lesley could have stayed in Palermo itself where one could see all sorts of curious sights, such as an octopus tied up with pink ribbon in the fish market, but the Ente Turismo installed them in a nondescript luxury hotel a few miles outside the city. This could only be reached by walking through a most appalling slum (a sickening contrast), and the buses which were supposed to take the delegates to the concerts in the Teatro Massimo were invariably late, which meant that the beginning of the concerts were missed. The Palermo authorities had surpassed themselves in the production of the Festival programme and had insisted on making the English translations themselves, resulting in some masterpieces of prose. W. R. Rodgers was particularly unfortunate as he had written the libretto for a short opera by Elisabeth Lutyens called *The Pit* which was based on a mining disaster and was being performed in the Festival. At a special request he had sent an excellent synopsis of the action to the London office, which we then forwarded to Palermo. This was translated into Italian and then back into English for inclusion in the programme with some strange results, such as, " In a coal-mine there happened a rock-slide. Two men and a boy were invested seriously. One of the miners, gravely wounded, after a short painful agony, dies. The sorrowing and bewailing crowd of wives and women rush to the place of mishap".

Constant Lambert arrived in Palermo to conduct the British works in the Festival. After a period of depression early in 1947, he had married Isabel Delmer whom he had known since before the war, and he now seemed much happier. But he was not in a good state of health and it was as much as he could do to conduct the rehearsals and concerts. Humphrey had to supervise the rehearsals and also act as interpreter at the interminable delegates' meetings, so he saw little of Palermo except the interior of the Teatro Massimo. The second part of the Festival took part at Taormina, where the Searles were put in another luxury hotel with a spectacular view; but the concert hall, in the hotel itself, was not very satisfactory. To escape from this rather artificial atmosphere, Karl Amadeus Hartmann, Luigi Nono and Humphrey would often prefer to go into the village and consume a humble plate of spaghetti and a glass of wine while conversing in a variety of languages.

After the Festival, Constant remained in Sicily to finish a piece for the British section of the ISCM, *Trois Pieces Negres sur les Touches Blanches* for piano duet. Humphrey went to Milan where Dallapiccola had organised a congress of twelve-note composers. The London Times music critic, Frank Howes, seemed amused that the delegates, on one of their free evenings, were taken to a performance of *The Tales of Hoffmann* at the Scala. But the congress, probably the first of its kind, was well worth while and led to further co-operation between composers of many countries

The first performance of *Gold Coast Customs* was due to take place on 17 May 1949. In some trepidation Searle asked Edith Sitwell herself to come and hear the music. For this purpose he borrowed his landlord's drawing-room, which contained a grand piano and seemed more suitable than the "aviary", but Humphrey heard afterwards that she had found it desperately cold. At least she approved of the music. He had asked Constant to conduct the work, but he preferred to share the speaking part with Edith. The performance took place before an invited audience in the Concert Hall of Broadcasting House. While in Palermo, Constant had finished his "*Trois Pieces Negres sur les Touches Blanches*" for the same concert. The pianists in both works were the Peppin twins, Geraldine and Mary, who had recently made their concert debut and were young and glamorous-looking. Constant and Edith sat at a table; Edith in a long gold cloak; Constant conducted Edith, and at times appeared to be conducting the conductor of the orchestra as well. The performance went very well and the audience seemed to be impressed; at any rate the BBC immediately arranged two further studio broadcasts of the work later in the year. Searle confessed that he had miscalculated the power

of the loudspeakers in the Concert Hall, so that the voices of the reciters were sometimes drowned by the orchestra; in the later broadcasts the reciters sat in a separate studio with a view of the conductor.

As Lesley's lawyer friend had given his opinion that there should be no legal objection to our marrying, the wedding was arranged for Humphrey's 34th birthday, 26 August 1949. They were married at the Marylebone Registry Office, and afterwards had a party at 44 Ordnance Hill. At that time, Lesley only had the small flat over the garage and they were unable to get the use of the studio till the following summer. And so the party was held in the yard outside. It was fortunate that the weather was fine, as a large number of friends came along, including Constant and Alan Rawsthorne. A double bass player who was a good amateur photographer climbed on to the wall and took some pictures of the scene.

As a post-nuptial present for Lesley, Humphrey wrote the gorgeous Poem for 22 strings. The texture of this was suggested by a work of the Polish composer, Andrzej Panufnik in his Lullaby for 29 Strings and 2 Harps. Panufnik was living in Poland at the time, some years before his dramatic defection to the West, and in the pre-Gomułka era, all Polish composers were expected to base their works on folk-song. So in his work a folk-tune gradually descends from the highest register of the violins to the lowest depths of the double basses, with a dense and highly chromatic accompaniment. Searle liked the idea of a work for a number of solo strings, and in fact had been asked to write such a work by the Dutch composer Gerhard Schurmann for an orchestra in Holland, but his piece is strictly twelve-note and does not use folk-songs. In form it is more like the growth of a plant or tree becoming increasingly animated after a very quiet start, rising to a climax, then collapsing and reviving in a different manner, an idea which Humphrey was to express again later in his Finnegans Wake setting known as The Riverrun. In the event, the Dutch performance of the Poem did not take place, and it was first performed by Hermann Scherchen at the Darmstadt Summer School in 1950.

The BBC is normally helpful to members of its staff who have recently resigned by engaging them as outside producers, and, early in 1950, Humphrey was asked by them to produce a comprehensive series of orchestral, choral and piano music by Liszt. He was thus able to fulfil Constant's long-cherished desire to conduct the Faust Symphony and he also conducted the rarely heard Funeral Ode, La Nocturne, and the first performance of the Grand Solo de Concert for piano and orchestra. This previously unknown version of the Grosses Konzertsolo for piano solo had turned up in MS at an auction at Sotheby's and Humphrey was asked to identify it. He obtained a photostat of the MS, which only contained the orchestral score, and was able to fill in the solo part from the solo piano version.

As a result of this series, a letter appeared in the Radio Times from Dr. Vernon Harrison suggesting the formation of a Liszt Society to publish, perform and, if possible, record his lesser known works. Searle seized on the idea and at once approached a number of people who were interested in, or had worked actively with Liszt's music such as Louis Kentner, the great Liszt pianist, Constant, of course, the Hon. Edward Sackville West, who had written a radio play "A Pipe for Fortune's Finger" about Liszt, Ralph Hill and Sacheverell Sitwell, both biographers of Liszt, and William Walton. The President was Professor Edward Dent, the friend and biographer of Busoni and Humphrey was the Hon. Secretary. He contacted Schott's, who had published many works of Liszt's in his lifetime, and they agreed to print a volume of the late piano works, including the first publication of the Csárdás Macabre and many of the late works such as Nuages Gris, Unstern and the 3rd Mephisto Waltz. These were only available in the Breitkopf Collected Edition of Liszt's work and had long been out of print. Further volumes followed over the years, as well as a number of public performances and, although Searle had to retire from the secretaryship in 1962 owing to pressure of work, the Society was still functioning actively publishing works, arranging Liszt piano competitions, and doing propaganda for Liszt's music. In addition many famous pianists such as Louis Kentner and Alfred Brendel recorded works published in the Society's volumes; and in 1960, Humphrey wrote a letter to Sir Thomas Beecham on behalf of the Society, as a result of which he made his famous recording of the Faust

Symphony. The Society is at any rate partly responsible for the greater appreciation of Liszt as a composer today, not only in England but in other countries as well.

Apart from the BBC fees for arranging the Liszt programmes, the Searles financial situation was rather tricky. Lesley was still working for the LCC as a welfare adviser, but she was only able to bring home £6 a week, as her unfortunate left-wing views barred her from promotion to higher office. As no money had come in from the ISCM, Searle had resigned from the Secretaryship in the summer of 1949. (The money he was owed was eventually paid to him by Benjamin Frankel out of his own pocket who succeeded Edward Clark as chairman of the British section of the ISCM). Humphrey was given some work as a deputy teacher at the Royal College, but was not allowed to join the staff as the authorities were frightened that he might "infect the students with atonality" as they put it. For the same reason, he could not get work writing incidental music for radio or films, as the producers were afraid that he might produce a twelve-note score. Unfortunately, Lesley had to give up her job in the summer of 1950, as continual early rising and the pressure of work were beginning to affect her health. However, Searle was commissioned by Philip Inman, the son of Lord Inman, to write two books, *Twentieth Century Counterpoint* and *The Music of Liszt*, for their small publishing firm, William and Norgate, of which he was chairman, and the advances from these supported the Searles for the moment. There was no book on either subject in English at the time, and he had been told that many people have found both books useful. Humphrey also did some broadcasts for Anna Instone and Julian Herbage on a programme called "Music Magazine". He had a slight speech impediment which he thought might prevent him from speaking properly, but in fact it was not noticeable.

He had been asked by Erik Blom, the editor of the fifth edition of Grove's Dictionary of Music, to write a new article on Schoenberg for it. Humphrey wrote to Schoenberg in 1948 in order to obtain information about his recent compositions and writings, and took the opportunity of sending him a list of works that had been performed in the BBC Third Programme since 1946 by himself, Berg and Webern, and also by younger atonal and twelve-note composers such as Dallapiccola, Elisabeth Lutyens, Rene Leibowitz and Fartein Valen. I reproduce his reply.

Your letter of October 27. was very enjoyable for me, because of many, very good news.

One of the most interesting is your idea to form a 12-tone composer's association, which might be very fruitful. I would like to know more of the details of this project.

I am also very glad to hear of Miss Lutyens. It is very interesting that also a lady participates in these aims.

The list of the works which you have performed in the BBC is very interesting: but has this stopped now? Do they not perform any more of these works? Is there a new leader, and is Edward Clark still there?

Thank you very much for your good news, and I hope soon to hear from you again.

Many cordial greetings,

Yours

Arnold Schoenberg.

P. S. It might be possible to produce a book in which all members of the association describe their own approach to 12-tone.

(Something of the kind suggested in Schoenberg's postscript was done by Josef Rufer in the appendix to his book, *Composition with Twelve Notes*).

Thereafter Searle kept in correspondence until his death in 1951 and, through Philip Inman, was able to arrange for the first British publication of "Style and Idea" and the first publication of "Structural Functions of Harmony". His last letter was written to Humphrey shortly before his death. Julian Herbage had asked to find out if Schoenberg would be willing to make a contribution to "Music Magazine" on any subject of his choice. His reply was characteristic.

A message that the BBC asked Searle for a lecture, to be spoken on a tape has suggested at once a subject: "Advice for Beginners in Composition with Twelve Tones. Unfortunately, when he conceived this, he had forgotten that television is not so general in use in England than in America. Thus he did not know whether this lecture which will use many musical examples, would come into effect only if one reads them, was acceptable for the BBC. There would still be a possibility to print in a cheap manner sheets containing the examples if the BBC can distribute them in time. Namely the examples will bring so many changes the improvement of which is perhaps less easy to realise by the ear than by the eye. Humphrey admitted that this lecture would be very technical and direct itself to the higher educated musician, to those who can apply the advice he would give them in their composition. Thus it is much less theoretical or aesthetical than technical compositorial. Of course, musicologists might profit there from and add much of the knowledge he would procure them to their tools of criticism. Besides, it will clarify many problems of this technique and prove how much inspiration must contribute in order to create a real work of art. Humphrey asked the BBC. "Please tell me as soon as possible, this lecture should be delivered. Perhaps BBC suggests something where I can use my newly published records or some which have been privately made. "

Searle learnt later that Schoenberg actually began to write a script for the programme. His pupil Leonard Stein, who became the Director of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute at U. S. C., Los Angeles, gave Searle a copy of it in 1976.

The editing of "Structural Functions of Harmony" (which was not published until after Schoenberg's death) presented some difficulties. Though Schoenberg's English was fluent, it was also highly original and could sometimes be obscure, especially in discussions of technical matters. In order to make his words clearer to the reader Humphrey inserted alternative terms in brackets, while keeping Schoenberg's original wording intact. He also compiled a glossary showing the difference between Schoenberg's technical terms and those normally used in either England or America. The American publishers of the book felt that Searle had not gone far enough and wanted him to rewrite Schoenberg's language completely where necessary, but he replied that he was unwilling to act as Rimsky-Korsakov to Schoenberg's Moussorgsky by "tidying up his work", and they accepted that. He had the support and help of Leonard Stein

After the first performance of *Gold Coast Customs*, Edith Sitwell wrote Searle a very kind letter, which was reproduced in her *Collected Letters*, and also in Elizabeth Salter's "Edith Sitwell - Fire of the Mind". From then on Lesley and her husband were often asked to lunch with her at her club, the *Sesame Ladies' Foreign and Imperial* in Grosvenor Street. Sometimes the three of them lunched alone; sometimes it was part of a large party of poets and writers, such as T. S. Eliot, Osbert Sitwell, Stephen Spender, Arthur Waley, Dylan Thomas, John Heath-Stubbs, Sydney Goodsir-Smith and David Gascoyne, as well as Sir Kenneth Clark, her agent David Higham, Alan Pryce-Jones, literary editor of *The Times*, and various old ladies whom Edith took under her wing. Humphrey also carried on a fairly long correspondence for the next few years during her absences from London, whether at the family homes at *Renishaw* in Yorkshire and *Montegufoni* in Italy or during her American trips. Edith also sent us all her publications as they came out.

In June 1950, Searle went to Brussels as the British delegate to the ISCM Festival in a vain attempt to extract the money due to him. However, while he was there, he was able to attend the first performance of Webern's last completed work, the Second Cantata Op. 31. This was conducted by Herbert Hafner, a charming and highly gifted Austrian conductor who died a few years later from a heart attack while actually conducting a performance. His wife, Ilona Steingruber, was an equally gifted singer who sang the title part in the first recording of Berg's Lulu.

In August, Lesley and Humphrey went to Darmstadt for the first performance of the Poem for 22 Strings Opus 18. This took place on 25 August, the day before his 35th birthday. Only composers under 35 were entitled to be performed at the Summer School, so he just scraped home. 25 August was also the 50th birthday of Ernst Krenek, who was at Darmstadt that year. The students gave him an early morning serenade with one of his own works on that day. The performance of the Poem under Hermann Scherchen went very well and thereafter he took an interest in Humphrey, the greatest British composer since Purcell, and gave many performances of his works and Searle wrote a number of works specially for him. Edgar Varese was also at Darmstadt; it was the first time he was recognised since the 1920s, and it marked the beginning of his present reputation. He played a record of four of his works from the Twenties and there were many long discussions. It was in Darmstadt that Humphrey had met for first time the post-Webern generation of composers, Boulez, Nono and Stockhausen.

About this time a friend of Searles, the Irish writer and scientist William Reid McAlpine, visited him and read aloud some passages from James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*, a book he had never been able to get to grips with. Hearing the words read aloud made all the difference, and Humphrey was particularly taken with Anna Livia's final monologue, the death of the river in the sea and her subsequent resurrection as dew and rain on the hills. Bill explained to Humphrey the form of the book - the cycle of life - and he decided to set part of the final monologue for speaker (an Irishwoman, preferably from Dublin) and orchestra. To avoid making the work impossibly long, he had to cut out the middle section about the children Shem and Shaun; but as he found a passage after this where Joyce returns to the same thought as in the opening passage, and managed to retain the continuity of ideas He showed the text to Scherchen when he visited England during the winter, and he agreed to perform the work in Germany during the following year. It was called *The Riverrun* after the last and first word of the book.

In 1951, Humphrey and Lesley went again to the Darmstadt Summer School, where he had been asked to lecture on English 12-note music. It was held simultaneously with the ISCM Festival in nearby Frankfurt. They attended some of the concerts in Frankfurt, which entailed late-night coach journeys back to Darmstadt which was rather exhausting. However, the Frankfurt programme did include the first performance of the Dance round the Golden Calf from Schoenberg's *Moses und Aaron*, a most exciting experience.

The young Australian pianist Gordon Watson, a pupil of Egon Petri, intended to celebrate the 140th birthday of Liszt, 22 October 1951, by performing the *Transcendental Studies* complete in the Wigmore Hall, and he asked Humphrey to write a sonata for him for this occasion. He decided to write a virtuoso piece, fiendishly difficult, more or less in the form of the Liszt B minor sonata but in a twelve-note idiom. He sent the music off to Gordon piece by piece as he wrote it, and he told the composer afterwards that if he had received the whole sonata at one go he would have despaired of ever learning it. While he was writing this work, Humphrey had a very curious experience. Three times while the music was progressing in a certain direction something told him to stop and write something completely different, and each time he heard the next day of the death of someone with whom he was connected, either as a colleague or a friend. The first was the death of Schoenberg on 13 July 1951. He was nearly 77 so it was not unexpected, but it came as a shock as Humphrey had only just received a letter from him, written while apparently in good health.

The second death was even more grievous. Constant had been working on his ballet *Tiresias*, which was due to be produced at Covent Garden in July and had finished the music, but had had to call in various friends and colleagues, including Humphrey, to help him to write out parts of the full score from his indications. He was unable to go to the premiere, as he was in Cheltenham for the first British performance of the *Poem* by the Boyd Neel Orchestra at the Festival of British Contemporary Music. The Press criticisms of *Tiresias* hurt Constant very much, and produced angry letters to the papers from the Sitwells and other friends of his. He was not well at the time, and kept having fainting fits for no apparent reason. On one occasion, Humphrey was sitting with him in the George in the early evening when he had had little or nothing to drink. He suddenly felt unwell and Humphrey took him home by taxi. In August, he came to a party in Searles studio after conducting a Prom. At the end of the party he suddenly passed out and had to be lifted into a car. It was assumed that he must have been exhausted. The very next day he and Isabel, together with the Searles, had lunch with Edith Sitwell; he was in sparkling form, as if nothing had happened the night before. But a few days afterwards, Humphrey received a late-night phone call from Denis ApIvor, who is a doctor as well as a fine composer, saying that Constant had been taken to the London Clinic in a state of delirium. Searle telephoned his flat in the morning and was told that he had died in the night. This was a terrible shock and Humphrey could only walk aimlessly round the yard outside his house for the rest of the morning.

Constant died three days before his 46th birthday. Apparently, he had been suffering from diabetes for some time but had always refused to see a doctor. Isabel only called in Denis Aplvor because he was a personal friend. Some curious phenomena occurred after Constant's death; at his memorial service Louis Kentner was intending to play his *Aubade Heroique* on the organ, but the instrument refused to emit a single note during the service, although it played quite normally afterwards. Constant had always loathed organs. Then, in the following January concert of the Society for Twentieth Century Music, which included Constant's *Li-Po* poems in the chamber ensemble version, and his piano concerto, a large black cat appeared on the platform and sat there throughout the performance. At the end of the concert, it stalked off and was never seen again. Like myself, Constant was a great cat-lover and once did a broadcast for *Music Magazine* on 'Cat - the Friend of Man'.

The third death, in September, was that of Cecil Gray. Humphrey had not known him as well as Constant, but had had many conversations over fifteen years, and he admired his writing very much. He was only 56. He became very depressed after Constant's death.

Gordon Watson's performances of the *Transcendental Studies* and the Searle Sonata were very successful, and both he and the composer got good notices in the Press. Shortly afterwards, H Humphrey went to Dusseldorf for the first performance of *The Riverrun*. Scherchen and the composer had worked out a somewhat makeshift German translation of the text; Joyce must be the hardest author in the world to translate into another language, but at any rate it gave the sense of Joyce's words. The orchestra under Scherchen played the music well, but Searle was somewhat alarmed when the statuesque lady, looking rather like Brunnhilde, who was the speaker, instead of murmuring gently "Soft morning city" on her first entry, spat out "Sei gegrusst, STADT!" with real Teutonic venom. Scherchen found a more suitable speaker for the second German performance in Mannheim the following year, and once he even performed it in English on Rome Radio with a male speaker but the work was not really heard properly until it was done later with an Irish speaker.

Early in 1952, some friends suggested the formation of a Society for 20th Century Music to give performances of modern "classics" as well as works by younger composers in the old Hampstead Town Hall. Such an undertaking would be unnecessary today, but at that time it was impossible to hear works by Schoenberg, Berg, Webern and even Bartok, either on the BBC or in London concerts, and Stravinsky was only represented by his three early ballets. A small committee was formed and managed to persuade the BBC to repeat most of the programmes in the studio, so that in most cases the artists were willing to reduce their fees; this was necessary because of the small seating capacity of Hampstead Town Hall. The Mayor of Hampstead was asked to open the series with a short speech.

He said that he had little knowledge of 20th century music, but had heard that morning two very beautiful examples of it at the funeral of a fireman, Walford Davies "God be in my Head" and Solemn Melody. The orchestra then burst into one of the most dissonant pieces ever written, Varese's Octandre.

In addition to the composers just mentioned there were works by Dallapiccola, Peter Fricker, Roberto Gerhard, Elisabeth Lutyens, Bernard van Dieren, Alan Rawsthorne and many others. In the final concert Edith Sitwell recited "Facade" and refused to take a fee, although the hall was sold out. In the same concert, Gordon Watson played Searle's sonata and also took part in Schoenberg's "Ode to Napoleon". Humphrey introduced him to Edith, and they soon became firm friends. Unfortunately, as the series as a whole lost money. There was not yet sufficient support for modern music in London and the first season was also the last. But at least a trail had been blazed which anticipated the splendid achievements of William Glock when he later became Head of Music at the BBC.

Edith had presented Humphrey with a copy of her poem about the atom bomb, *The Shadow of Cain*, when it was first published as a separate volume, and he now decided to complete his trilogy of works for speakers and orchestra by making a setting of it; as in *Gold Coast Customs*, he used a male chorus in addition to the speakers and decided to promote the first performance of this himself. Edith was due to leave for an American trip in November, so she had to give the concert while she was still in England. She asked Dylan Thomas to share the speaking part with her on the only date when she was available both the Festival Hall and the Albert Hall were booked for other concerts, so the concert was given in the Palace Theatre on Cambridge Circus, not ideal acoustically, but possible. The manager of the London Symphony Orchestra, who were playing for the concert - Humphrey had many friends among the principals who advised that as they were giving the first performance of a new work they might as well combine it with out-of-the-ordinary rather than repertoire works, so the first half of the concert consisted of works that were not often played at that time - Berlioz' "Corsair" overture, Bartok's second piano concerto with Gordon Watson as soloist, and Liszt's symphonic poem "Hamlet". Robert Irving conducted the first part, and Searle conducted "The Shadow of Cain" in the second. In this the speakers were placed off-stage, as in "Facade", and their voices were heard through a loud-speaker. Robert Irving acted as conductor for the speakers. Edith evidently approved of the music - "You've done it again!", she said to Humphrey, and the concert was a success artistically if not financially; the musical public was still unused to going to hear unfamiliar works.

On her way to America Edith wrote me the following letter:

"Just a word (as I roll from side to side, up to the heavens down to the floor of the ocean). It has been a greatly exciting week. I am more profoundly proud than I can say of having been a part of the concert - above all, proud of the magnificent music of "The Shadow of Cain", and of its dedication. Who could hear that music, and not know it to be a very great work indeed? I believe the audience was profoundly moved and impressed. Everyone who has written to me was overcome. Thank you, dear Humphrey, a thousand times.... I shall miss you both more than I can say during my five months' exile. I wish (underlined) you were coming to America. Oh dear! The ship is rolling, and I must stop."

The LSO decided to include *The Shadow of Cain* in a series of Winter Proms which they were giving early in the following year. Edith was still in America, so Dylan spoke the entire poem and Humphrey conducted it again. This performance was broadcast by the BBC. There was some correspondence about the positioning of the speaker, the LSO wanted him to be on the stage this time - and Dylan wrote me this letter about it:

"The main reason I thought my presence on the stage unnecessary was the reaction of the audience, and the press, last time. No-one, for a moment, suggested that not seeing Edith and me was any loss. The whole piece is so hideously dramatic that the sight of a little fat speaker on the stage would, I think, detract from the dramatic value - (though it may, of course, add to the horror). "

In the end Dylan did appear on the stage, his feet hidden by banks of flowers. After the concert, there was a party at Searle's studio; Dylan danced wildly, like a faun, and stuffed sausage rolls down the ladies' cleavages. Two policemen, hearing the noise, looked in and soon joined the party. When most of the guests had gone, Dylan told us a long story about the funeral of his father, who had recently died. Apparently Dylan returned home with the hearse three days after the funeral had taken place, having been God knows where meanwhile, to the great alarm of his mother who said to him: "You'll do that to me when I go!" After that Dylan went to America, and Humphrey never saw him again.

Constant had resigned from the chief conductorship of the Sadler's Wells Ballet in 1947, but remained as artistic adviser till his death. With his unique knowledge of all the arts, it was obviously impossible to replace him by any one person, and so the Ballet set up a committee under the chairpersonship of Ninette de Valois to advise them on all artistic matters. The members were William Goldstream and John Piper (art), Myfanwy Piper and Sacheverell Sitwell (literature) and Arthur Bliss and Searle (music). Choreographers usually like to choose their own libretti, designers and composers and, while the committee did not produce any very brilliant ideas, it at least prevented some disastrous mistakes. For example. Searle arranged for Malcolm Arnold to be commissioned to write the music for the Coronation ballet *Homage to the Queen*, and this was to bear fruit later on. Humphrey was glad to remain in touch with the ballet, and the "expense fee" which Covent Garden paid him for attending committee meetings was a useful addition to his rather meagre income. The committee functioned till 1957 and was then disbanded as being no longer necessary.

In the summer of 1952, Lesley and Humphrey, made a trip to Germany and Austria. "The Riverrun" was to be performed in Mannheim at the beginning of May, and the Poem at the ISCM Festival in Salzburg at the beginning of June. In the intervening time, Searle had arranged to give some lectures on English music for the British Council in various North German towns, and so after the Mannheim performance, which went very well, the Searles took the train to Hamburg, which housed the headquarters of the British Council. On arriving there, Humphrey was astonished to find that the rather junior official who had arranged the lectures had failed to clear the question of his fee with his superiors and was expecting him to lecture for nothing. Humphrey had to take the matter to a very high level in the British Control Commission before he could be paid a proper fee and be given travel warrants to the various places he had to visit. The composer Tom Eastwood, who was then the British Council representative in Berlin, helped him by arranging for them to be flown to Berlin where he was to give a lecture. This was only four years after the Berlin airlift and West Berlin was by no means the gaudy and jazzy place it has since become.

They then continued our journey to Salzburg which Humphrey was glad to find unchanged since before the war. The Poem went well under a Norwegian conductor. While they were there, discussions which took place, chiefly between the younger Commonwealth delegates, led eventually to the resignation of Edward Clark as President of the ISCM and the removal of the Central Office from London to Baden-Baden. Though Edward was a man of great experience, he found it difficult to carry on all the work with the help of only one secretary.

In 1951, Humphrey had written a somewhat absurd setting for speaker, flute, cello and guitar of Edward Lear's "The Owl and the Pussy-Cat" as a Christmas present for some friends who were staying at Ordnance Hill at the time; in return they presented him with a copy of T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats". Some time later, a performance of *The Owl and the Pussy-Cat* was given at a charity concert in Nottingham, organised by Reggie Smith in aid of the Nottingham Playhouse; the cast included Douglas Byng, Paul Scofield, Peter Ustinov and many others. The regional director of the Arts Council was in the audience and asked Searle if he would write two further settings of cat poems for the same combination, as he wanted an interlude for a poetry reading tour of various Midland towns which he was organising. The tour eventually took place in 1953; as speaker, he was lucky to get Ian Wallace, who was not only an excellent singer, but a fine comic actor as well, and the players were George Crozier, Freddie Phillips and Joy Hall. Humphrey set two

poems from T. S. Eliot's book, *Macavity and Groultiger*; the tour went to such towns as Kettering and Northampton, and the Searles caught up with it in Birmingham, where they also met the poetry readers, Valentine Dyall, an old friend, and Daphne Slater. The Cat Poems were performed without a conductor; apparently Ian Wallace, standing in front of the players, gave the beat to them with his heel. Since then he has given many performances of them in his inimitable manner, and Searle dedicated the Eliot settings to him; his quilted smoking jacket and big dark eyes gave him an agreeably cat-like appearance.

Scherchen now asked Searle to write a purely orchestral work for him, and he decided to attempt a symphony. This posed certain problems; the classical symphony depends to a great extent on contrasts of key which cannot be realised easily in twelve-note music, and neither Schoenberg nor Berg had completed a twelve-note symphony, though they both thought about it. (Webern's *Symphony* is another matter, being on a miniature scale, with its first movement a double canon and its second a set of variations). Humphrey decided to use classical forms to a certain extent. After a slow introduction, there is an Allegro in Sonata form with two subjects; the recapitulation is the inversion of the exposition. This leads into a slow movement in ABA form which sinks down to the lower depths at the end, and is followed by an intermezzo in the form of a free fugato with continually increasing dynamics and speed until it reaches the finale, a kind of rondo which eventually comes to a climax and breaks off. A slow Coda ends the work in the mood of the introduction. Much of the music is violent and explosive; Stalin was still alive at the time Searle wrote it, and he felt that a third world war was imminent. So the work is a kind of protest piece. It is not as long as some symphonies - under 25 minutes. It is based entirely on the BACH theme (Bb-A-C-B natural), its inversion and a transposition; this is the note-row which Webern used in his *String Quartet Op. 28*, but the sound of the two works naturally differs a great deal.

As Scherchen paid no commissioning fee, Humphrey needed to have something to live on while writing the symphony, and so undertook the translation of "*Composition with Twelve Notes*" by Josef Rufer, who had been Schoenberg's pupil and assistant in Berlin in the 1920s; it was the first really authentic exposition of Schoenberg's methods. This was the first time, he had translated a complete book from the German, and he did not find it easy; fortunately he had the advice of Erwin Stein, an early pupil of Schoenberg whom he had known at Universal Edition in Vienna before the war. He had been living in London since 1938, working at Boosey and Ha Hawkes; his-daughter Marion is a pianist who was married first to the Earl of Harewood and later to the one-time Liberal leader, Jeremy Thorpe.

The symphony was first performed at a concert given by Hamburg Radio in the autumn of 1953 under Scherchen; the programme also included the second piano concerto by Schoenberg's Greek pupil Nikos Skalkottas. The symphony seemed to be well received; it was performed on the BBC in the following year by Sir Adrian Boult, who later recorded it with the LPO under the auspices of the British Council. It was also performed in Paris at a concert of British music from all periods, directed by the Belgian conductor Franz-Andre. Humphrey wanted desperately to go to this performance but had no money for the journey. Fortunately his mother helped him without telling my father. In the event his appearance at this concert had important consequences ten years later.

In the spring of 1954, Searle was invited to attend the Festival of Twentieth Century Music in Rome. He had recently set three poems by his friend Jocelyn Brooke, better known as a novelist, and these were performed there by Emelie Hooke, a well-known exponent of modern songs; she was the only singer in England at that time who could tackle Webern's music. These songs are rather more abstract and less romantic than most of his music up to that time; he had been experimenting with some of the methods of Boulez and Nono, but was brought back to Humphrey's normal style by a demand from Scherchen to write a short piece for piano, strings and percussion, "twelve-note but simple", to be played by students at a *Jeunesses Musicales Festival* in Donaueschingen. Searle wrote a *Concertante* which has been played by students in many countries, even including those of the Royal

College of Music; it was probably the first time that twelve-note music resounded within those hallowed halls.

"The Riverrun" at last reached England in 1955, with performances in Liverpool and London under Scherchen. Searle had great difficulty in finding an Irish actress who was willing to tackle Joyce's text; even Louis MacNeice confessed himself baffled and could not recommend anyone. Eventually he met an actress at, of all unlikely places, a party given by some psychiatrists who were friends of Edith Sitwell's. Her name was Jean St. Clair, and she obviously had a very good idea of what the text was about. She gave an extremely intelligent performance, though possibly her voice was on the light side for the portrayal of a woman of seventy. At any rate Scherchen was pleased with her, and she could be heard without the aid of a microphone.

Gordon Watson had asked Humphrey to write a piano concerto for him, and he began it in the winter of 1954-5. A friend and neighbour of theirs in St. John's Wood, the conductor George Weldon, included it in the programme of a concert he was due to conduct at the Cheltenham Festival in July 1955. At the same time, Searle was asked to write a piece for horn and strings for Dennis Brain to play at the Aldeburgh Festival in June. This meant that he had to work on both pieces at once, a thing he disliked doing and, as neither work had a commissioning fee, he had to do hack work as well to stay alive. He finished the Aubade for Aldeburgh on time, but George Weldon had a preliminary rehearsal for Cheltenham with his orchestra about a month ahead of the concert date. As Searle simply could not finish the full score (which had to be written on transparent paper) in time for this, Weldon had to be content with going through three-quarters of the work at the preliminary rehearsal. When the material came back to the publishers, Humphrey found that one orchestral player had written on his part: "Wait for the next gripping instalment!" However, the work was ready in time for the later rehearsals, and for the performance which went very well although the orchestra made a tremendous din in the over-resonant Cheltenham Town Hall. Unfortunately, Gordon Watson was unable to play the solo part as he was on an Australian tour, but Clive Lythgoe stepped in at short notice and gave an excellent performance.

This concerto is one of a few works which Searle wrote in the middle of the 1950s which does not use strictly serial technique but is freely atonal; others are the Jocelyn Brooke songs and the Aubade. The concerto also differs from some of his earlier works in being less indebted to Viennese romanticism and more extrovert in style; Bartok is probably the chief influence here, and the work is bright and cheerful on the whole, with an introduction for percussion alone and an interlude for piano and percussion between the scherzo and the finale.

Night Music had been included in the programme of the Three Choirs' Festival at Hereford by the enterprising conductor Meredith Davies, so that Humphrey had three works in British festivals that year. He did not think the Hereford clergy liked "Night Music" very much; one deacon was heard to mutter: "Ungodly music". On his 40th birthday, 26 August, Lesley and Humphrey invited his parents round for drinks and snacks. They were desperately short of money, and needed to do urgent repairs to the studio; under the terms of the lease they are responsible for all inside and outside repairs and, as the house is over 140 years old, these are frequently necessary. When Searle explained the situation his father replied: "Go and see my solicitor". After that, he never again asked his parents for money.

Chapter ten

Humphrey wanted to go back to the BBC in order to earn some money, but Lesley would not hear of this. She wanted him to go on composing. Later in the year, things slowly began to improve, David Gascoyne, whom Searle met at one of Edith Sitwell's luncheon parties, had written an imaginative feature for radio called Night Thoughts and he suggested to the producer, Douglas Cleverdon, that

Humphrey should be asked to write the music. This meant a breakthrough into BBC work and, since then, he has written incidental music for numerous productions, including texts by Shakespeare, Ibsen, Gogol, Camus, Dostoevsky, Buchner, Brecht, Anouilh, Giles Cooper, Louis MacNeice and others. The producers with whom he worked most frequently were Douglas Cleverdon, H. B. Fortuin, R. D. Smith, Michael Bakewell, Donald McWhinnie, John Tydeman and John Gibson. In addition, the BBC Drama Department commissioned him to write a radio opera on Ionesco's *The Killer* in 1963, and a "spoken oratorio" on Blake's *Jerusalem* in 1970 and a cantata on Thomas Mann's *Dr. Faustus* in 1977.

Night Thoughts was probably one of the first BBC productions to use *musique concrete*. There was no BBC electronic workshop in 1955 and only discs, not tape, were available. To accompany the long dream sequence in the centre of the feature, the famous percussionist James Blades was asked to record all possible kinds of percussion sounds. Then they were played backwards at various speeds and make the speed either twice or four times as fast or slow. The BBC had no variable speed controls in those days. In spite of these technical handicaps some very interesting sounds were produced and were later congratulated by a French composer of electronic music on what had been able to achieved with such meagre resources.

The choreographer Kenneth MacMillan was about to produce his first ballet for Covent Garden and, after hearing Humphrey's *Poem*, he asked him, to write the music for it. This was *Noctambules*, a rather fantastic ballet about a magician who can grant everyone their secret desires and thus he brings a rich boy and a poor girl together, promotes a private soldier to a field marshal who conquers his enemies, and restores youthful beauty to an aging woman. Finally, he falls in love with his own creation, the restored Beauty, and disappears with her to the dismay of his girl assistant, who is left dancing faster and faster in endless circles as the curtain falls. This libretto gave a great deal of scope for atmospheric music. As Kenneth had asked for unusual rhythms, Searle gave him as many of these as he could. The ballet was produced at Covent Garden in March 1956 with Leslie Edwards and Nadia Nerina in the principal roles and conducted by Robert Irving. It received an ovation from the public, but for some reason was dropped from the repertoire in subsequent seasons, except for one revival in 1958.

Malcolm Arnold saw a performance of *Noctambules* and at once suggested to Muir Mathieson that Searle should be asked to write music for feature films. Mathieson was the musical director of Korda Films and had persuaded many British composers, including Vaughan Williams, Walton, Bliss, Alan Rawsthorne, Malcolm Arnold and others to write music for him. Humphrey had in fact written scores for two short documentary films about Norway for him, so that he knew he could write a tune if necessary and, during the next few years, he wrote a number of film scores both for him and his former assistant John Hollingsworth, both features and documentaries. Searle found it difficult to learn the technique of writing film music, which has to fit the action on the screen down to a third of a second, but he eventually saw that, if the tempo is 1-60 or a multiple thereof, one can work out the lengths mathematically and still produce an interesting score. The chief trouble is that the music is the last element to be added to the film and the composer cannot even start work on it until the film has been finally cut. Even after giving the measurements to the composer, the film editors sometimes change their minds about the length of individual shots, so that adjustments have to be made at the recording session itself, where time is money, especially when a copyist is in attendance to write out new orchestral parts on the spot. In addition, producers sometimes have only a rudimentary idea about music, or cannot convey their exact wishes to the composer. In one feature film for which Humphrey wrote the score, the producer and director were at loggerheads, each telling him to write the music in different ways, and scores often have to be written very much against time. Writing film music can nevertheless be interesting and rewarding, and Searle has never despised it as an art, but felt that film music should stay in the cinema and not be made into orchestral suites, with certain exceptions such as the film scores of Bliss and Walton. Of his own documentaries, the ones Searle most enjoyed doing were the two about the Fuchs-Hillary Antarctic expedition, one on the work of Henry Moore, Greek

Sculpture with Michael Ayrton, and Woodland Harvest, and a film on the work of the Forestry Commission. His most interesting feature film was *The Haunting*, in which he worked with Robert Wise, the producer and director of *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music*, a kind quietly spoken man and the opposite of the usual image of the Hollywood tycoon.

The Haunting is a scary film and it is the terrific music that makes it scary.

As his financial position was now easier, Humphrey was able to take Lesley to Aix-en-Provence in the summer. After the success of *Night Thoughts*, the BBC had commissioned David Gascoyne to write a second radio feature, to be called *A Celebration of Festivals*. David was staying with Meraude Guinness, the widow of the Chilean painter Guevara, and various other friends, in the Tour de Cesar outside Aix, and the idea was that the music should be discussed for this new production. But when David gave Searle the script, he found that it consisted only of a series of quotations and there was nothing for which he could write the music. David never wrote the text. So Humphrey started on his second symphony, for which he had had an idea for a long time, using a very ancient piano in the upstairs room of a well-known cafe on the Cours Mirabeau. Life was pleasant in Aix and there were many talks with various friends, including the painter Matthew Smith who had a studio in Aix at the time. Unfortunately, the climate did not suit Lesley as she had that very fair skin which often goes with red hair, and she could not stand the sun. She was pleased that her husband was happy at being in the South of France, one of his favourite areas, and for the first time in seventeen years, and he promised her that if they went to the South the following year they would go later in cooler weather.

In the spring of 1957, Mr and Mrs Searle were invited to the Prague Spring Festival, together with Malcolm Arnold and his first wife, Sheila. This was the first time Humphrey had been to a Communist country and he did not quite know what to expect. Their hosts, the Union of Czechoslovak Composers, were very friendly and generous, but they also met a lot of ordinary people in cafes and other places who were desperate for contacts with the West and wanted to talk about what conditions in their country were really like. Czechoslovakia was very Stalinist at that time, as was reflected in the modern Czech music heard in the festival, mostly enormous heroic symphonies based on the principle of social realism. Malcolm and Humphrey tended to opt out of performances of such works as there were plenty of other events in the festival, including an enchanting production of Dvorak's opera *Rusalka*; the Polish composer Kazimierz Serocki and his wife Sonia also opted out. They were most genial and convivial companions and remained friends. Serocki arranged for Humphrey to be invited to the Warsaw Autumn Festival of 1959, and again in 1961

Apart from the concerts, there was also a congress about problems of modern music at which the Russian composer Dmitri Kabalevsky, a charming man who spoke excellent English, put forward the official Soviet socialist realist view of music for the people. Humphrey felt that he had to reply, and gave a general survey of tendencies in modern English music, stating which kinds of music were most successful with the public, neither the ultra-conservative nor the avant-garde, but the broad spectrum which lay between. He pointed out that the British government had no need to compel composers what to write. Kabalevsky was not annoyed by this speech and remained on friendly terms with Humphrey.

On the return journey from Prague, the Searles went through East Germany to Weimar, where Humphrey wanted to visit the Liszt Museum again. Their visas only arrived at the last moment and they had to rush to catch the train, which took them through a beautiful landscape down the course of the Vltava and past Dresden. In Weimar, they were met by a German musician, Bruno Voelcker, who had written a book on Liszt who informed Searle that the Liszt MS had been moved to the Goethe-Schiller Archiv, which would not be open till Monday. They had arrived on a Saturday night. So on Sunday, they had little to do except walk round the town and it was bitterly cold and everything seemed to be shut. However, they were able to visit the Liszt house, which had now been altered to look much as it did in Liszt's time. It had become a tourist attraction and a guide was showing people

around. Somehow the atmosphere of the house, which Humphrey had experienced before the war, had disappeared.

As they had been given visas for only two days, they had to leave Weimar on the Monday afternoon. Humphrey was intending to look at the Liszt MS in the morning, but the local police had insisted that they report to them or else they would be arrested. This wasted a lot of time, so that when they reached the Goethe-Schiller Archiv they only had time to greet the Director and hurry to catch their train without seeing any MS. They travelled to East Berlin and then took the U-Bahn through to West Berlin and this was before the days of the Berlin Wall. Humphrey was not sorry to leave East Germany which he found austere and drab, although West Berlin by contrast was garish and over-commercialised.

About this time, Humphrey received a telephone call from Basil Dean who was putting on a new play by Lesley Storm called Favonia, about a statue of a goddess on a Greek island who comes to life with an alarming effect on the inhabitants. Dean said that Walter Legge of EMI had suggested that Searle be asked to write music for it and he had naturally heard of this famous theatrical producer who had been the director of ENSA during the war, and he had also heard many stories of his insensitive and even cruel behaviour to his actors. So Humphrey was somewhat apprehensive when he went to see him. He lived just round the corner from Searle in an elegant Regency house in Norfolk Road now, alas, pulled down by the landlords. By this time he had mellowed considerably and they got on very well and, in fact, this was the beginning of a friendship which was to last until his death more than twenty years later at the age of 89.

Basil Dean had arranged for a West End production of Favonia and the money was put up by an American actress who was to be the leading lady. Characteristically, Basil sacked her after the first rehearsal, with the result that both the money and the production vanished. Fortunately, the incidental music was recorded in advance, and used when Basil later put on the play at the Liverpool Rep. Humphrey collaborated with him only once again. In 1960, he wrote incidental music for a play called Out of this World which opened at the Windsor Theatre and lasted four nights in the West End. For the rest of his life, Lam nevertheless looked on Humphrey as a kind of musical adviser.

In 1957, Humphrey Searle was very much occupied with incidental music, although he also managed to write a short Toccata for organ, his first work for this medium and a suite for clarinet and piano for the summer school at Attingham near Shrewsbury, which was run by the composer Wilfred Meilers and which Searle and his wife attended in August. Thea King and Gordon Watson played the Suite, and Gordon also played the piano sonata. In October, the Searles had a short holiday in Cassis which Humphrey had not visited since 1939. It had not changed much, except for a new casino on the pier. Then they went on to Basle where they met Egon Petri who had returned to Europe from California for the first time since before the war, following the death of his wife. Searle had always wanted to meet Petri, and Gordon Watson had given him an introduction and they spent a hilarious evening together. He was a very amusing man and Searle managed to persuade him to promise to come to London and record some programmes for the BBC who had authorised Humphrey to approach him. However, he was also rather depressed and had hoped to settle in Europe again but found that he, perhaps the greatest pianist of his age, had been more or less completely forgotten. In Basle, he had only one pupil who had followed him from America and, when he asked in a record shop if they had any of his recordings, the assistant replied: "Did you order any, Herr Petri?" Eventually, he returned to California and he never came to London.

Mr and Mrs Searle then went on to the Donaueschingen Festival where Stravinsky was conducting the first European performance of his ballet Agon, a work which uses 12-note methods in some sections. This was the only time Humphrey saw him conduct. He was very vigorous although he was 75 at the time, and Humphrey noticed that in the Bransle Gay, where the castanets have a regular rhythm in 3/8 against varying rhythms on the other instruments, he conducted, not the 3/8, but the

other more complex rhythms. The Searles also had a very pleasant meeting with Hans Werner Henze whose Nocturnes and Arias, a beautiful romantic work, was also performed at the Festival. Also staying in Donaueschingen with his elderly father was a keen amateur musician, Hans Otto Jung, the proprietor of a magnificent vineyard at Rudesheim on the Rhine who became and remained friends.

Back in London, Humphrey finished the second symphony in sketch form and played it on the piano to Lesley to whom he was intending to dedicate it. She had been complaining of a pain in her stomach, but otherwise seemed to be well. Searle persuaded her eventually to see her doctor who sent her to a specialist who diagnosed a cyst on the womb and arranged for her to go into hospital. He said that the operation which he himself would perform was a simple one. But after it, he asked Humphrey to go and see him and told him that she had terminal cancer. Searle was working at the time on a radio production which helped to keep him going. The only people he felt he could confide in were a doctor friend, Frank Winton, a keen amateur cellist, and his wife Bessie Rawlins, a professional violinist. They saw him through this difficult period. Lesley died six days after the operation, on the morning of Christmas Day 1957. She was a marvellous person without whose help Humphrey certainly could not have achieved as much as he did. He loved her very much and when he spoke to me about her that was evident.

Chapter eleven

Humphrey was kept busy working on two scores which had to be finished by the end of January, a work for 10 instruments, Variations and Finale, Op 34, and a film about comic crooks. As it happened, the film recording and the concert containing the first performance of the Variations took place on the same day and with the same players, the Virtuoso Ensemble who were the principals of the Sinfonia of London. Before this, Searle went to stay with his brother John and his wife Jennifer in Baron's Court, returning to Ordnance Hill in the daytime to work on the scores. With some help from two friends, Peter Racine Fricker and Lawrence Leonard, who wrote out some of the scores from Humphrey's indications, he just managed to finish both works in time.

Reggie Smith, the BBC drama producer, introduced him to Patrick Wymark, the actor who later became famous for his performances in *The Plane Makers*, *The Power Game* and other tycoon roles. Pat was then a member of the Shakespeare Company at Stratford but wanted temporary accommodation in London as he was working on a TV film during the day and playing Trinculo in *The Tempest* at Drury Lane at night. Humphrey lent him the upstairs flat at Ordnance Hill and moved into the studio. Pat remained a good friend until his early death, aged 44, in 1970.

After the film recording and the concert, Humphrey went to Paris to visit friends and then returned to more work. He was asked by the BBC to write music for a TV film about Henry Moore, whose sculpture and drawings he had admired for many years. In addition, since John Pritchard wanted to give the first performance of the second symphony at Liverpool in October, he had to get the full score finished. He also had a letter from Scherchen asking him to write a one-act chamber opera for the Berlin Festival in October. He said that the subject should be rucksichtslos, with no holds barred, and so Humphrey chose Gogol's *The Diary of a Madman*, for which he had already written incidental music for a radio production with Paul Scofield, but Searle wrote entirely different music for the opera. Scherchen gave certain restrictions. There were to be no more than four singing characters and an orchestra of 15, but electronic sounds could be used, and there could be silent characters. Humphrey had never tackled opera before and was rather alarmed at the prospect but nevertheless accepted the challenge.

In April, he went to beautiful Amalfi with Jocelyn Brooke and he enjoyed the scenery. But his stay was cut short by a summons from Scherchen to discuss the opera at his studio in Gravesano in the

Italian part of Switzerland. Humphrey stayed in his house and they sorted out the libretto, which in the original version had been far too long. Scherchen seemed pleased with the final result.

In London, the choreographer Peter Wright went to see Searle about a ballet he was planning on the life of the Great Peacock Moth, based on the description by the entomologist Henri Fabre. The male moth cannot eat but can only mate and then die. Peter heard a record of the Variations and Finale and asked Searle to expand them into a ballet score for him. The ballet was performed at the Edinburgh Festival in August, and has since been given in Stuttgart, Tel Aviv and elsewhere.

The cartoonist Gerard Hoffnung had been giving his celebrated concerts at the Festival Hall in which he combined music with witty repartee and visual effects and they were invariably sold out. He asked a number of composers to write pieces for them and Humphrey had written an absurd setting of "Lochinvar" for speakers and percussion for the first concert. The percussion included a waldeufel, which makes a kind of farting noise, cutlery thrown into buckets, and police whistles and sirens, and Sir Walter Scott's deathless words were spoken by Hoffnung and Yvonne Arnaud, hardly a Scottish pair. Searle was on the committee of the concerts, which met in various curious places such as the Zoo where they visited the monkey house, where Hoffnung and Malcolm Arnold screamed at the monkeys and the monkeys screamed back. For the second concert, Humphrey had suggested the idea of a Concerto for Conductor and Orchestra, in which each would be at cross-purposes with the other. Unfortunately, he did not have time to write such a large piece owing to other commitments and had to be content with writing the music for Punkt Kontrapunkt, in which two learned professors produce an endlessly complicated analysis of a piece by Bruno Heinz Jaja, after which the work itself is played, lasting 30 seconds. He did actually use total serialisation in this piece, i. e. serialisation of rhythms, dynamics and orchestration as well as pitch and it seemed to work. On the night Searle was going up to Liverpool for the first performance of the second symphony, he was very sad to hear of Hoffnung's sudden death. He was an amusing person and a good man but, unfortunately, he was fond of food and was overweight, yet insisted on rushing about at high speed, which resulted in a fatal heart attack at the age of only 34.

The ballet, the symphony and the opera all went well at their respective premieres, and Humphrey began to think about another symphony. His friends Walter and Hylda Beckett, the former is a musician and a cousin of Samuel Beckett. They were living in Venice at the time, and invited Humphrey to stay with them. He went several times in 1959, and was entranced by the beauty and atmosphere of the place. As the Becketts lived in an unfashionable part of the city, Searle was able to walk around and see many parts which few tourists visit, and found the whole scene fascinating. He sketched out a Venetian symphony, the first movement giving the general atmosphere of the city, including the chimes of some bells which he heard every day from a church near the Becketts' flat. The second movement was originally a nocturne, Notturmo lagunare. inspired by a boat trip at night across the Venetian lagoon, with the full moon shining on the calm black water and the island of San Francesco del Deserto in the distance reminding him of Bocklin's painting of The Isle of the Dead.

The last movement, Festa e Bora was a tarantella, interrupted by the stormy wind which whistles down from the Alps on to Trieste, where one actually has to hang on to the rings in the walls in order to climb up to the castle in winter. Later, after a visit to Greece, Humphrey changed this scheme and scrapped the original sketch for the first movement and replaced it with a portrait of Mycenae, and altered the order of the other two movements, so that the work now ends with an adagio.

In the summer of 1959, he suffered from one of his serious nose-bleeds which, on average, could last up to 48 hours. To add to his troubles his tom cat, who had been with him for ten years, was poisoned by a kindly neighbour. He really felt at a low ebb and, to recuperate, went for a fortnight to Cap d'Ail on the French Riviera where the Becketts were working at a Swedish summer school. They left after a few days, so Humphrey travelled around the area by bus, bathing, eating, drinking and soaking up the sun, though he was not a sun-bather. He returned for a performance of the second symphony at

the Proms under Basil Cameron who profoundly admired the work. After that things began to improve. He had not been able to look at a woman since Lesley's death but in October, a girl with whom he had worked professionally rescued him from the Slough of Despond and life began to get back to normal.

In December, he paid a short visit to Greece. Having read and indeed written so much Ancient Greek at school and at Oxford, he was fascinated to see some of the places he had read about such as Athens, Delphi and Mycenae. The latter, even in broad daylight, still seemed to smell of the blood of the Atrides, and it suggested what is now the first movement of his third symphony.

In the spring of 1960, the New Opera Company gave the first British performance of *The Diary of a Madman* at Sadler's Wells, with Alexander Young in the title role. The BBC made a radio version of this production, directed by Barbara Bray, and it won the UNESCO Radio Critic's Prize for 1960, which meant that it was broadcast in many countries of the world.

The opera, *The Diary of a madman*, only lasts 25 minutes and tells of Popristchin, a clerk in some government offices who works for the Director of the section and mends his pens. He is 42, ugly and with straw coloured hair and is infatuated with the Director's daughter, Sophie. who is beautiful in her white dress and he wants to enter her bedroom and see what is there. On a particular day, he sees and hears two dogs, Madgie and Fido, talking to each other and, at first, believes he is drunk. He then hears them saying that they wrote letters to each other and later he demands to see and, in fact, takes Madgie's letters home which reveal her love for one Teplov and how ugly Popristchin is. Sophie's father wants her to marry a gentleman. The chief of the section upbraids Popristchin for not being at work for three weeks and much later this ugly clerk is convinced that he is King Ferdinand of Spain and that it only took half an hour to travel from Russia to Spain. The clerk is now in a lunatic asylum and believes that the earth will fall into the moon and grind everyone's noses. Finally, he calls on his mother to save her poor sick little boy. This music is excellent for the plot and is very effective.

His friend, Richard Gorer, had commissioned Humphrey to write a string quartet. As he had written nothing for this medium so far, he did not want to write a quartet in orthodox classical forms. He wrote three movements in contrasting moods. These were played at the Darmstadt Summer School by the Juilliard Quartet in the early summer of 1960. Later, he was asked to write incidental music for Peter Hall and John Barton's production of *Troilus and Cressida* at Stratford-on-Avon, and Humphrey spent some time there seeing the various plays. The first performance of the third symphony took place in September at the Edinburgh Festival, again under John Pritchard. It is tremendous and the middle movement is a tour de force and very, very exciting.

Chapter Twelve

Some time in the summer of 1960, Humphrey was introduced by Reggie Smith in the George pub to an attractive dark-haired girl, called Fiona Nicholson. She was a Scottish actress who had worked both in Britain and South Africa and had recently returned from Spain, where she had been living for some months. She said that an actor colleague of hers had arranged to meet her at a club off Charing Cross Road in order to introduce her to his agent. As Humphrey was going in that direction, to renew his subscription to the Arts Theatre, he offered her a lift. Since she apparently wanted to get away from her colleague after the interview, he suggested that they meet at the Salisbury pub at 5. 30. When she arrived she was starving, having had no lunch, and so Searle bought her a Scotch egg for which the woman behind the snack-bar charged 2/6d, an exorbitant price for those days. Feeling outraged, Fiona helped herself to a lettuce leaf and a slice of tomato, whereupon the woman shouted, "Who's stolen me garni?" Humphrey felt that Fiona was a girl of spirit and, after that, he saw her several times. On one occasion, he took her to a performance of the Berlioz Requiem at a Prom

concert in the Albert Hall, and she told him afterwards that, after hearing the four brass bands entering, much to her astonishment in the Tuba Mirum, she suddenly realised that he was the man she was going to marry. In fact, they were married on November 5th that year in the Catholic Church in Cheyne Row, Chelsea.

Fiona's father, Jack Nicholson, had died in 1949 and her mother Mollie had married again. She and

Fiona's stepfather, Albert Maginess, was on a visit from South Africa and came to Searle's studio several times before the marriage. On one occasion, Mollie saw to her surprise that Humphrey had a small bronze plaque of my Grandfather Schlich. It transpired that Fiona's father had been a pupil of his grandfather at Oxford shortly after the First World War, and her mother had kept a letter from him to her late husband advising him to make a career as a Forestry Officer in India, which he did, staying there for over 25 years before retiring in 1947 when the country was partitioned. But neither Fiona nor Humphrey knew anything about forestry!

As she was a Catholic at the time, although she changed her beliefs since, and Humphrey was not, he had to have instruction in the Catholic faith from the Chelsea parish priest, Father Alfonso de Zulueta. He had previously known a cousin of his with the same name, who was Professor of Roman Law at New College. Father de Zulueta, a very intelligent man and a Jesuit, realised that he was unlikely to make a convert of Searle, but had to do his duty as a priest. Humphrey listened politely to what he had to say, but could not agree with his arguments. At the last session, a friend, Christopher Saltmarshe arrived, who was going to give Fiona away at the ceremony. Kit had been a friend and contemporary of John Davenport at Cambridge and was a brilliant poet and writer who was at one time the editor of the ill-fated magazine *Night and Day*. Some may still remember that this marvellous publication was brought to an untimely end by the damages awarded against it for an article by Graham Greene on Shirley Temple, then a child star. Kit had somehow been sidetracked into a fairly lowly job in the BBC Overseas Service at Bush House and had known Fiona for some years, and remained a loyal friend until his early death. He was small in stature and had a waspish sense of humour which is illustrated by the following incident. A very tall, thin writer with a pallid and somewhat sinister appearance had married an equally tall, thin woman. They had a baby which was frequently left in a pram on the pavement outside the George pub. When friends remarked that this was a scandalous way to treat a baby, Kit replied, with his slight stutter: "On the c-contrary, I'm d-delighted to see that its n-not been eaten".

The wedding was attended by a large number of friends, including Louis MacNeice and it was unusual to see the son of a Protestant Archbishop of Northern Ireland at a Catholic service. Afterwards, there was a party in the studio at Ordnance Hill and then the newly weds off to Paris for two nights and spending most of the honeymoon in Greece, Crete and Rhodes, and Humphrey was able to see much more of the country than on his previous visit. After a few days in Athens, which Humphrey said was all one needs to spend there, a car was hired and they drove to Delphi, which was as marvellous as ever, and then took the ferry to Patra, returning to Athens via Olympia, Nauplion and Mycenae. Next, they flew to Heraklion in Crete. Knossos was impressive, whatever one may think of Sir Arthur Evans's restorations, Searle liked them. But the island as a whole was disappointing and the weather was not too good. They took a boat to Rhodes which was very much enjoyed, with its extraordinary mixture of cultures and Lindos was particularly beautiful. In a restaurant there, the main course was served half cold on a very cold plate and Humphrey wanted it heated up, but failed to make the waiter understand this by speaking in various modern languages and so he thought that he would try Ancient Greek and said "poli thermo". The waiter nodded and smiled and took the plate away and, after half an hour, it was returned stone cold. It seems that the word for "hot" in modern Greek has been "zesto" for hundreds of years.

The rest of this chapter is something of a travelogue.

Searle's piano sonata was due to be performed at a concert given by an Italian pianist at the British Council in Athens and so the honeymooners, arranged to fly back there on the day before the performance but, when they arrived at the air terminal at some unearthly hour in the morning, a little man walked in and said to the assembled passengers: "The plane it do not fly today" and walked straight out again. In desperation, the Searles caught a boat which took 24 hours to reach Athens, and arrived there just in time for the concert. The next day, they flew to Rome where they had dinner with the writers Eduardo and Vera Cacciatore who lived in a flat above the Keats-Shelley House in the Piazza di Spagna. Then Mr and Mrs Searle flew to Madrid, where they were greeted by Bernard Spencer, the poet who was a friend and schoolfellow of Louis MacNeice and was then the British Council representative in the capital. Bernard showed them around Madrid, including a number of places which are well off the tourist beat. He was a very interesting man and a congenial companion and the visitors were extremely sorry to hear of his untimely death only three years later.

They flew back to London. The Diary of a Madman was due to be performed in a public concert by the French Radio, but they were unable to get a flight which would reach Paris in time. However, it was performed there on stage a few months later by the Berlin Studio Company in the Theatre des Nations series, and the Searles went over for this performance. They also saw the Berlin production of Schoenberg's "Moses und Aron", conducted by Scherchen. Humphrey found it most impressive and exciting, which seems all the more remarkable when one remembers that it is a philosophical work about the nature of God.

In the summer of 1961, Humphrey and his wife went to Portugal and Spain, putting their car on a cargo boat to Lisbon which carried twelve passengers, Their companions were highly respectable but deadly dull, so that the four-day journey seemed endless. In Lisbon, they met the Portuguese composer Fernando Lopes Graca whom Humphrey had known from the ISCM. He was at odds with the Salazar regime and the only official activity he was permitted was to conduct a choir in performances of folk song arrangements on the radio. He showed them some of the less well-known parts of Lisbon and was generally very helpful. Then, after a few days visiting the magnificent palaces of Cintra and Queluz, the Searles drove south to Praia da Luz in the Algarve in blazing sunshine in his open sports car, getting severely sunburnt on the way. Here there was an introduction to two young men there, a Scottish writer and an American painter, who took in paying guests for the princely sum of £1 a day for full board in a magnificent house with a large garden right on the seashore. They stayed there for a week and then drove on into Spain across the river ferry at Santo Antonio. The contrast between the people of the two countries was startling. The Portuguese spoke in low voices and seemed cowed and sad, like their fado songs, whereas the Spaniards were always excitable, voluble and full of life and yet both countries were then ruled by very similar dictatorships.

In Spain, Humphrey drove on past Cadiz and through La Linea to Gibraltar. This was many years before the frontier was closed by the Spanish. They stayed at the Rock Hotel for a few days, and Humphrey made friends with the Spanish lady who played the piano in the bar in the evenings. She kindly offered to let him use her piano in her flat in La Linea in the mornings while she was out. This was extremely useful, as he had started work on a 4th symphony, which was of a rather different character from the others. He had been asked to report the Granada Festival for The Times and was very glad to have an opportunity of visiting this beautiful and exotic city. He went to an orchestral concert in the circular roofless Theatre of Charles V, to a ballet in the Gardens of the Generalife, marvellously depicted by Manuel de Falla in his Nights in the Gardens of Spain, and to a song recital by Victoria de los Angeles in one of the open courts of the Alhambra. The last was the scene of a slight contretemps since in the middle of one song, a few drops of rain began to fall, not enough to disturb the most elaborate toilette at Ascot but the Spanish audience stampeded for shelter, leaving only the British visitors stoically sitting with newspapers over their heads. Mme. de los Angeles and her pianist were under cover. She was clearly annoyed at the audience's reaction and carried on bravely with the recital. The rain stopped and the audience returned but when further drops of rain caused yet another noisy exodus the diva lost patience and marched off the stage, never to return.

On the way back from Granada, Fiona was bitten by an extremely virulent type of insect in Malaga, which caused a large and very painful swelling on her arm. They drove to Gibraltar and located a doctor with a surgery in the Main Street, and she called on him for treatment. He informed her with pride that at the age of 84, he was the oldest practitioner on the Rock, and produced his late mother's gallstones preserved in a glass jar for Fiona to admire. Apparently, she was not over-impressed and drew attention to her own problem. He reacted, she told her husband later, with unseemingly agility for a man of his years, by chasing her around his surgery. She finally escaped, but not before he had charged her £2 for a prescription. This turned out to be for calamine lotion, which was completely useless to her. A Spanish doctor in Algeciras eventually got rid of the infection with antibiotics.

Humphrey and Fiona settled in an hotel on the Spanish coast a few miles east of Gibraltar. He was able to drive into La Linea every day to work on the 4th symphony in the pianist lady's flat and go on from there to Gibraltar to collect mail and do the shopping. In the evenings, they usually drove to one of the cafes nearby. At one of these they were approached by an English party who had apparently run out of petrol and were looking for help from the nearest British car driver. The party consisted of a middle-aged lady, her grown-up son and a youngish family friend. It turned out that the lady had been building cottages at a seaside village between Gibraltar and Algeciras where she herself had a large house. She proposed to let these to friends and acquaintances at £5 a week, and asked if the Searles were interested in taking one. This seemed a good idea at the time; neither Fiona nor Humphrey liked the English climate, and thought it would be nice to have a place to escape to when conditions became too unpleasant at home. Although the rent of Ordnance Hill was low in those days, Spain was incredibly cheap. This was long before the present-day tourist invasion, and one could get a glass of sherry for 4 old pence. So the lady's offer was gladly accepted and a contract was signed with her at a lawyer's office in Gibraltar. After she had left, the lawyer called Humphrey back and pointed out that the lessors of the cottage were described as a waiter, a fisherman and a carpenter; the landlady, being a British subject, was not allowed to assign a lease for what was Spanish property. Searle asked the lawyer's advice on the deal and he did not think that there was anything radically wrong, and as the financial dealings with the lady were conducted in sterling, and so he signed the lease.

They moved into the cottage for a few weeks in August and bought some cheap furniture, and also had the services of a local girl who acted as a maid, for very little money, and of her husband as a gardener and factotum. The cottage was right on the beach and, though small, it was picturesque. To start a garden they bought some cuttings of bougainvillea and other exotic plants from the British cemetery in Malaga, where they were alarmed by the number of memorial tablets to British citizens who had apparently died of alcoholism. Indeed, alcohol was extremely cheap in Spain at that time. The Searles bought some empty garafons, large wicker-covered glass containers, and visited an old gentleman of 90 who had been Mayor of Algeciras in 1902. From his store, Humphrey filled his garafons with red and white wine, sherry, brandy, and anis for an incredibly low price, but he drew the line at Spanish gin since British gin and whisky were easily available in Gibraltar.

The arrangements at the cottage were somewhat primitive. The water pump worked only intermittently, cooking and heating were by butane gas and, as there was no electricity, one had to rely on oil lamps. Luckily, they had some of the Aladdin variety which Searle remembered from his days in Sussex. The village of Beckley, although only six miles from Rye, had no electricity until the late 1920s.

They returned to London in September. Humphrey had to write music for a radio programme, *Artists in Orbit*, with a text by Donald Cotton with whom he collaborated on several subsequent occasions. This was an experimental programme, produced by the enterprising Douglas Cleverdon, and it was probably the first one ever made in stereo. It also contained some unusual effects, such as bird-song being gradually slowed down until it turned into woodwind phrases, not an easy assignment for Humphrey who finished the music and then went off to Warsaw, where Fiona and he had been invited to the 1961 Contemporary Music Festival. Humphrey had previously gone there in 1959 on his own

at the invitation of Serocki and, this time, he met the couple at the airport and greeted them with great enthusiasm. Polish composers had been free to write what they wished ever since Gomulka came to power in 1956, although they still received numerous State commissions which brought in fees and royalties. In most other Communist countries, except Yugoslavia, the State piper still called the tune, which usually meant that composers had to follow the ideals of socialist realism and write fairly diatonic works on patriotic themes. Later, the position eased considerably in Hungary, and, to some extent in Czechoslovakia, although the crushing of the Dubcek government in 1968 led to a similar repression of the arts. But in the Soviet Union, composers at that time may not have twelve-note or avant-garde music performed in their own country, although they did write such music in secret and were allowed to have it performed in the West. The Warsaw Festival is an excellent example of fairness in that it gives hearings to works of all kinds from all countries, including electronic and experimental works from Western Europe and America as well as enormous patriotic symphonies from Bulgaria and Romania.

Among old friends at the Festival were Luigi Nono and his wife Nuria, Schoenberg's daughter. Humphrey had visited them in their handsome apartment on the Giudecca in Venice while staying with the Becketts in 1959. Nono's *Il Canto Sospeso*, is a cantata on texts written by victims of concentration camps, created a considerable impression. Among the Russian musicians present was Shostakovitch, who did not appear to enjoy the electronic music very much. Some of his quartets were played by the Borodin Quartet from Moscow, excellent and charming musicians who quietly proceeded to drink the Poles under the table, and the Poles are no mean drinkers! After the concerts, which were usually long and sometimes dreary, a party used to repair to the one night-spot in Warsaw, the Krokodil in the old city. Here they drank vodka and the usual toast was "Nazdrowie ex!", which meant that the drink had to be knocked back in one gulp. After several of these toasts some of them, including the Searles began to feel a bit wobbly, but were provided with glasses of water as well as vodka, which were indistinguishable from each other. Fiona, who was pregnant at the time, switched her vodka glass for a glass of water. Unfortunately, the final toast required each to exchange glasses with the person sitting opposite, and Serocki was disgusted to find himself drinking pure water! The Poles are kind people and generous hosts, but it is difficult to disguise the drabness of their capital. However, when one remembers that the city was completely destroyed in 1945, so much so that the Poles even considered resitting it elsewhere. One can only admire them for rebuilding the city including the medieval old town in facsimile.

From Warsaw, Mr and Mrs Searle took the midnight train to Budapest, where Humphrey had been invited to read a paper at the Liszt-Bartok Congress. 1961 was the 150th anniversary of Liszt's birth and the 80th of Bartok's. The journey took them across Czechoslovakia as they were not allowed to take any Polish money out of Poland, nor to leave the train in order to change money in Czechoslovakia, and so there was a problem when they were asked to pay for their lunch in the dining car. Fortunately, the Czech frontier officials, who spoke German, advised them to wait until they got to Hungary, where they could change their English travellers cheques into Hungarian forints and use these. The train did not go through Prague, but passed Bratislava, a beautiful city which Humphrey hoped he could visit some time.

Superficially, Budapest did not seem to have changed much since he was there in 1937. People were lively and cheerful, and there was plenty of good food and drink. The Searles were accommodated in the modern Gellert Hotel on the Buda side of the Danube, and the lectures took place in the Academy of Sciences on the other side of the river. They were given in many languages, most of them intelligible to the majority of delegates, but there was a mass exodus when a speaker began to read a paper in Chinese which was promptly translated into Hungarian. All the essays were later published in a special Liszt-Bartok number of the *Acta Musicologica* by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Humphrey's lecture, on Liszt and the Twentieth Century mainly discussed Liszt's later, forward-looking works.

Among the British delegates was Gerald Abraham, an old friend from Searle's BBC days, a charming man and an excellent scholar, who read an admirable paper on Bartok's relations with England. The other side of the coin in Hungary was shown one afternoon which Fiona and Humphrey spent with a leading Hungarian musician and his wife who took them on a car drive round the outskirts of Budapest and this Hungarian complained bitterly about the present regime. Searle feared that their car may have been bugged for, on their next visit to Hungary in 1969, he found that they were no longer on the official list of approved invitees supplied to the British Embassy by the Hungarian Ministry of Culture, and so it would have been unwise for their sakes to try to make contact.

However, on the official side all went smoothly. They were invited to coffee at the house of Dr. Bence Szabolcsi, a man of great learning and culture who wrote an excellent book about Liszt's last works, *The Twilight of Ferencz Liszt*. Among others who were present were the patriarchal Zoltan Kodaly and his young wife. Afterwards they drove to the Opera for a Bartok evening consisting of *Bluebeard's Castle*, *The Wooden Prince* and *The Miraculous Mandarin*, which was superbly produced in a highly realistic style. Another of the joys of the Congress was Sviatoslav Richter's dynamic interpretation of the solo part in Liszt's second piano concerto.

On the way back to London, Mr and Mrs Searle spent two or three days in Vienna. People seemed much more cheerful than before; the war was over, the Allies had departed, and there were signs of increasing prosperity. The city had not been too badly damaged by war and in the restored Opera House, they saw a performance of Verdi's *Don Carlos* which was splendid apart from the fact the Elisabeth and the Eboli towered over the diminutive Italian singer who played the title role. Humphrey much preferred the pre-war production.

Having arrived back in London just in time for the recording of *Artists in Orbit*, Humphrey was horrified to find that Douglas Cleverdon had expected him to write music for the final number, *The Circles* in which the cast sing accompanied by the orchestra. He discovered this on the morning of the recording and so the rest of the music was recorded, and in the afternoon, while the cast were recording the sections of the programme which did not involve music, Searle was lent a studio in which he wrote and orchestrated this final number. The parts were copied, rehearsed with the cast, who had to walk round and round the microphone in a circle to give the effect of different voices approaching and receding, and finally got the whole piece in the can. But it was a near thing!

Fiona had always had trouble with her inside. In Warsaw, at the suggestion of Sonia Serocki, she saw a gynaecologist who recommended that she should return to London immediately and rest. But she insisted on going to Budapest and Vienna and unfortunately she had a miscarriage in December, after a seven-month pregnancy. She had other similar troubles for some years until she finally had a hysterectomy, since when her health improved considerably.

The intrepid travellers went to Madrid for Christmas 1961, where they again met Bernard Spencer, and then to the cottage at Guadarranque. This village contained a curious English community, mostly of failed artists who were inclined to ply visitors with drinks early in the morning, so that it needed a good deal of firmness to get any work done.

Humphrey had been commissioned by the BBC to write music for a satirical cantata on the subject of the Golden Fleece with a text by Donald Cotton and Douglas Cleverdon was again the producer. Although their landlady allowed him to use the piano in her villa, he felt he needed one in his own cottage. Humphrey had bought an upright piano very cheaply from a friend in London and, as he was informed that it was impossible to obtain a piano in Spain, he had it shipped out to Gibraltar. There was then the problem of getting it through the Spanish Customs at La Linea. Fiona and her husband made endless trips to see officials, going as far afield as Malaga and Cadiz. Apparently, they had insulted Spanish National Honour by wanting to import a piano. "Spain is an exporter of pianos, not an importer", they told Searle. He had only ever seen one Spanish piano in Madrid and it was not a

very good on and the guitar had taken over. However, eventually, after a great deal of trouble and expense they obtained a handsomely embossed document which allowed them to keep the piano in Spain, but only for three months, whether it would have to be pushed out to sea after that, was not stipulated. At La Linea the Customs officials turned the piano upside down and removed all the keys. Fiona packed some table linen inside it, and they evidently thought that this was concealing drugs. Finally, after much excitement, the piano was allowed through the barrier and arrived triumphantly on a lorry, still upside down at Guadarranque, to the applause of the local population. It was then found that its wooden packing-case would not go through the door leading to our tiny patio, and the case had to be hacked to pieces so the piano could get in. Fortunately, the prudent Scottish manufacturer of the piano had numbered all the keys in sequence, so that Humphrey was eventually able to put them back in order. Even so, it never worked very well but the sea air must have affected it during the voyage and it was hardly worth all the trouble it had caused.

In the spring of 1962, the Searles went to Rome, where Humphrey had been asked to sit on a jury, together with Petrassi and Lutoslawski, among others, for an international competition for composers. There they were joined by Fiona's mother and stepfather, who had flown over from South Africa. Afterwards they went to Guadarranque with Fiona, while Searle flew to London to conduct the recording of *The Golden Fleece*.

Fiona's mother, Mollie, inadvertently alarmed some neighbours in Guadarranque, and an elderly American couple who occupied one of the cottages nearby. As a girl, Mollie Maginess had lived for a time in La Jolla, California, and when the Americans asked her if she knew the States at all she mentioned this fact and was startled by their reaction. It seemed that they were not married, but had run away together from La Jolla, which is not a large place, and they were terrified lest information about them might reach home! This couple had curious living habits since they would drink for six hours, sleep for six hours, drink again for six, sleep for six, and so on. They were never seen either buying or consuming more solid fare. The man also kept some liquor up a tree and would lower it with a rope when there was an emergency and this frequently occurred. At one party given by the landlady, the guests were given grapes soaked in anis, a local delicacy; the American woman took a long swig from the jar and commented:

"Gee, this is great, but why the grapes?"

Shortly afterwards, Humphrey paid a brief visit to Heidelberg, where *The Great Peacock* was given at the theatre. Since Peter Wright did not want this theatre to use his own scenario, as he was intending to put the ballet on himself in Stuttgart, they made up another story which more or less suited the music. From there, he went on to Munich, where his sparkling second symphony was conducted by Zubin Mehta in one of Karl Amadeus Hartmann's *Music Viva* concerts. Mehta had heard the work in Liverpool where he was assistant conductor to John Pritchard, and he has performed it quite often since, both in Germany and the U. S. A. thinking very highly of it.

In June, presumably on the strength of *The Riverrun*, Searle was invited to attend the opening of the James Joyce museum in his Martello tower at Sandymount, south of Dublin, described in *Ulysses*.

Humphrey had never been to Ireland before, but a number of Irish friends from London, including Louis MacNeice and W. R. Rogers, went over for the ceremony, and Humphrey was given an introduction to Sean McReammoin of Radio Telefis Eireann. This was the beginning of a friendship which lasted. Fiona had not been able to accompany him on this trip, as she was in hospital, having had an emergency operation, but as soon as she was well, the Searles went to Dublin for a holiday, which was followed by many further visits during which they made a number of Irish friends.

It was about this time that I met Searle. I wrote to him in appreciation for his music. He wrote back and invited me to London and I went the next Saturday. He was somewhat aloof for a few minutes

and Fiona was polite but clearly a dominatrix. He was reluctant to talk about his own music as he was a very modest man but demonstrated how great Beethoven, Bach and Liszt by demonstrating examples on the piano. His table was littered with pencils and manuscripts and had a bookcase crammed with scores. There was a framed drawing of Berlioz on the wall, a composer that did not appeal to me. He took me back to Waterloo station in his car although he hated driving in London. We corresponded many times since, but he always called me Mr Wright which I did not understand. When I met him, I was but a teenager. I noticed that his speaking always seemed somewhat breathless. He gave me a few welcome tips on music and his knowledge of music and composers was encyclopedic and told me that neglected composers are not necessarily inferior.

Peter Wright's production of *The Great Peacock* took place in the late summer of 1962. He had asked Humphrey to extend some of the numbers, and the ballet now reached its final shape. In the autumn, *The Diary of a Madman* was performed in Krefeld and Munchengladbach since the two theatres share the same company, and Searle was asked to return there the following year to conduct the German premiere of his third symphony.

The first performance of his fourth symphony took place in Birmingham in October 1962. The composer was invited to conduct and got on quite well with the orchestra, although they were rather noisier at rehearsals than his friends of the Sinfonia of London, with whom he normally worked for radio, television plays and films. In this symphony, he had tried to refine his style, as he felt that some of his earlier music had been rather heavy-going in places. The result was a somewhat abstract work, in which the thematic material was reduced to a minimum and the textures were mostly bare, although he still tried to maintain a dramatic element in the music. The result pleased the critics. *New Symphony* bespeaks a new Searle, wrote *The Times* but the public were somewhat mystified. At any rate, it was a work which he had to write at some time and he learned a lot from doing it.

Humphrey had noticed at the 1960 *Musica Viva* performance in Liverpool of his third symphony that the discussion afterwards centred mostly on the other work in the programme, *Prolation* by Peter Maxwell Davies, then a young up and coming composer. It was obvious that a wind of change was coming in contemporary music, and Searle could not disregard it. Not that he had ever tried to keep up with the Stockhausens, but, naturally, he had learnt something from the techniques of younger composers without consciously trying to imitate them. This new direction in music had the curious effect of causing Humphrey, from one moment to the next, to be no longer regarded as a wild avant-gardist but as an old-fashioned romantic instead. Not that he was worried.

While he was in Heidelberg during the summer, he was asked to write a ballet for the Wiesbaden Theatre in collaboration with Imre Keres, a Hungarian dancer who had escaped from Hungary with his wife during the 1956 uprising and was now principal choreographer at Wiesbaden. As his two previous ballets had been based on plots, Humphrey thought he might write an abstract ballet for a change. Keres was very practical, and worked out a sequence of dances, even suggesting the character of each dance and the number and sex of the dancers in each. He worked on this during the winter of 1962-3.

In January 1963, Humphrey had an unfortunate accident while on a visit to Guadarranque. He was driving along the main street of Algeciras when a scooter shot out of a side road on his right and hit his car. The driver was unhurt, but his pillion passenger stuck out his leg to minimise his fall and it was broken. This caused endless complications with the police, as in Spain and some other countries, there is a rule that traffic coming from the right has precedence, even from a minor road into a main street. With Searle at the time was his landlady's son, who speaks perfect Spanish but, although the accident took place in front of a crowded open-air cafe, he could find no one who would confess to having seen the accident. The police did not arrest Humphrey but warned him to be ready to appear at the trial of the case. This did not take place for some months, as the judge was away, and by the time a policeman was sent to Guadarranque to inform him of the date of the trial he was back in

London, and that caused further legal complications. As a result, it was decided to sell the lease of the cottage for the remaining three years of its five-year period, and, fortunately, found someone to take it off his hands.

In the early part of the dreadful winter of 1963, Humphrey was working on the *The Haunting* with Robert Wise, which meant endless trips to Elstree through the ice and snow by public transport, as it was impossible to drive. Meanwhile, he had been asked to orchestrate the B minor piano sonata by Liszt for Frederick Ashton's ballet *Marguerite and Armand*, a formidable task. This was produced at Covent Garden in March 1963 with Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev as the principal dancers and it became famous as a vehicle for this celebrated pair.

His abstract ballet *Dualities* was produced in May at Wiesbaden. Here again the critics were impressed, but the public found it somewhat austere. It has been the other way round with his more recent works, which have gone down well with the public while being attacked by the critics and he preferred it that way round! In July, an interesting evening was arranged in London by the Poetry Book Society under its director Patric Dickinson in which four British composers, Richard Arnell, Lennox Berkeley, Nicholas Maw and Humphrey were asked to set the same poem by Robert Graves, *Counting the Beats*. Naturally, all four composers produced settings in different styles and afterwards there was a general discussion of the relation between words and music in which everyone all gave their views, and various settings of *Come away Death* were performed as contrasting works. The singer was Gerald English, with whom Humphrey had not worked before but since then he became an admirable interpreter of Searle's vocal music, and Humphrey made a setting of John Donne's *Nocturnall upon St. Lucies Day* especially for him.

Meanwhile, Humphrey had been asked by Douglas Cleverdon to suggest a subject for a work for radio which the BBC might commission. Since 1960, Searle had become interested in the new wave of playwrights such as Beckett, Pinter and especially Ionesco, whose *Theatre of the Absurd* intrigued him very much. Humphrey had seen all his plays to date, and thought of making one into a radio opera but the trouble was that most of them were one-acters, and he wanted to write a full-length work. As *Rhinoceros* had already been set by someone else and *Amedee* did not seem quite suitable, he chose *Tueur sans gages*, *The Killer*. This had been expanded by the author from a short story, *The Photo of the Colonel*. Barbara Bray, who was now living in Paris, gave Searle an introduction to Ionesco, and he was most helpful, allowing him to make any cuts or alterations he wanted to, since the play is fairly long. Humphrey cut out quite a lot of the first part of the second act, which hardly brings the action forward, but otherwise kept to the main structure of the play. Ionesco wanted the opera to bear a different title from the play, so the composer went back to the original title of the short story and worked on the libretto during a holiday on Corfu, a beautiful island which he had not visited before, and which, in those days, was still unspoilt. There he ran into an old friend, the American conductor Newell Jenkins which he was always coming across in unlikely places such as Palermo in 1949, Budapest in 1961, and now in the tiny port of Palaeokastritsa. Naturally the Searles were glad to see him, but his friend Jack seemed a little annoyed and had hoped to get away from Newell's friends for once in this remote place.

Humphrey worked on the music of *The Photo of the Colonel* in London during the winter and had to work fairly quickly, as Douglas Cleverdon had set a transmission date for the following March. In fact, Searle finished the whole opera in five months, although it is not enormously long, about seventy-five minutes of music altogether.

Ionesco and his wife visited the Searles in London while he was writing the music. The composer played him most of the first two acts, and he seemed to be satisfied. They also visited him in Paris in his apartment high above the rue de Rivoli, a formidable climb, and found it full of rhinoceroses which had been sent him by admirers. He and his wife were in the process of unrolling an enormous tapestry which had been sent to him from Yugoslavia and which looked like covering every wall in

the flat. Ionesco said mysteriously, "We must get away from the Italians; they will come and make a noise". He seemed to be living in one of his own plays.

Humphrey conducted the BBC recording of the opera early in 1964 but, unfortunately, Alexander Young, who had given an admirable performance as the Madman in his first opera, was unable to undertake the leading part of Berenger, the common man who tries to solve the mysteries of the murders in the Radiant City, and a replacement had to be found at the last moment. Leslie Fyson sang admirably, but in difficult circumstances. The rest of the cast included Denis Quilley, John Noble and the veteran Edith Coates, whom Searle had known since before the war at Sadler's Wells. It is a fascinating, colourful and hugely entertaining opera and very satisfying and the public would love it, if they had a chance to hear it.

Chapter thirteen.

Early in 1964, Humphrey and Fiona received news from South Africa that Fiona's stepfather's heart trouble was getting worse and that he was not expected to live for more than a few months, and Fiona's mother asked if Humphrey and Fiona could come out for a visit. It did not seem possible at the time, as they simply had not got the money, but, shortly afterwards, Humphrey received an invitation from Stanford University, California, to be Composer in Residence for the academic year 1964-5. He had never been to America and knew practically nothing about American universities but, fortunately, his American friend and colleague Everett Helm was in London at the time and Searle was able to ask his advice. He strongly recommended him to go and Humphrey accepted the invitation and, on the strength of it, was able to raise an overdraft to pay for the South African trip. They flew to Johannesburg in March and the journey took a long time, as planes had to be changed in Luxembourg, and there was a stop off in Malta and several places in Africa. Eventually, they arrived after about 28 hours. Fiona's friend, the well-known South African actress Marjorie Gordon, had found them a hotel in the suburb of Braamfontein.

Next morning, they awoke to teeming rain. Johannesburg is not the most beautiful city in the world, and that morning it looked exactly like Manchester. Fiona was not at all amused by this comparison since for years she had been extolling the marvellous climate of the Transvaal. Humphrey had not been too keen on visiting a country which practised apartheid, especially after having lived for a time in fascist Spain. Later, the weather and his spirits improved and he found the rest of the trip interesting. Fiona's family all lived in Durban and so for the next three months they alternated between Jo'burg, Durban and Cape Town, where Humphrey had been asked to give some lectures at the University by Erik Chisholm, the Scottish composer who had settled in South Africa. He had been the first person to stage Berlioz's *The Trojans* and *Beatrice and Benedict* in Britain before the war. Gideon Fagan, the former conductor of the BBC Northern Orchestra, was now musical director of the SABC in Johannesburg and offered Searle some broadcasts and, as Fiona was given some work in radio plays, they were able to recoup some of their expenses.

Meanwhile, his publishers had arranged for the first stage performance of *The Photo of the Colonel* to take place in Frankfurt early in June, while the *Musical Times* in London had asked Searle's old friend Malcolm Rayment to write an article about him for their June number and also invited the composer to write a short piece for unaccompanied chorus which was to be published in the same issue. A few months previously, Fiona's cousin, Irene Nicholson, had given them her latest book *Firefly in the Night*, which was described as *A Study of Ancient Mexican Poetry and Symbolism*. Irene was a remarkable woman who lived in Mexico City for 17 years as part-time correspondent of the *London Times* and during this period, she wrote and translated several books about Mexican literature, art and even economics. Humphrey was particularly taken by her translation of pre-Columbian Mexican poetry, with their colourful imagery of song, birds and flowers and, for the

Musical Times, he set one of her short poems, Song of the Birds. He had also been asked to write a larger unaccompanied choral work for the Cheltenham Festival and, for this, he chose three more of these Nahua poems under the title of Song of the Sun and worked on these pieces while in Johannesburg.

For the first part of their stay, they moved between Jo'burg and Durban. Humphrey found Durban rather provincial and the weather was hot and humid, and bathing was restricted because of sharks. However, the people were kind and pleasant, and there was some beautiful countryside outside the city. They visited Zululand and also spent an enjoyable few days in an hotel high up in the Drakensburg mountains where the scenery is breath-taking. Fiona was offered the leading part in a radio production of Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken* and Humphrey made contact with the musical side of the SABC in Durban. In Jo'burg, they usually stayed at the Federal Hotel opposite Broadcasting House, a small and rather shabby establishment whose bar was frequented by actors and most of the English-speaking journalists in the city. Here they heard some horrifying stories of the activities of the Broederbond, the Nationalist Afrikaaner secret society and, of course, the signs of apartheid were everywhere. There were separate entrances in post offices for blacks and whites, separate benches in the parks, and so on. The city was full of blacks by day, mostly doing menial jobs, but they had to return to their black townships at night, often having to walk long distances. Surprisingly, they always seemed cheerful and smiling while many of the whites looked nervous and apprehensive.

Humphrey met many of Fiona's friends from the time when she had worked in the theatre and radio in South Africa. These included Michael Silver, the head of the Commercial Radio Corporation, Siegfried Mynhardt, the actor who has been described as the Gielgud of South Africa, who has a beautiful speaking voice and had played the part of the poet Ishak in Basil Dean's production of Flecker's *Hassan* a few years earlier, and many other actors and actresses. They were an amusing and friendly crowd and many cheerful evenings were spent together. Occasionally, the Searles stayed with Mike and Ethel Silver at their splendid house in the Northern suburbs, where most well-off people live. The Southern suburbs were considered rather lower-class. Some of the actors lived in the centre of the city and they often visited Marjorie Gordon and her English husband, Paul Vernon. When the time came for the Searles to go to Cape Town for the lectures, they drove from Durban along the Garden Route together with her sister, Sheila. They enjoyed the spectacular scenery although they often lost their way, and the 1100-mile trip took four days. They had two mishaps en route and the first was a puncture. They were miles from anywhere, and discovered to their horror that there were no tools in the car. Sheila produced a nail file, but it was hardly suitable for changing a wheel! They were in despair until rescued by a black gentleman in a large limousine, who had a splendid hydraulic jack. The second disaster occurred in the bush, not far from a place rather aptly called Wilderness when the fan-belt snapped and the water in the radiator boiled over. Here they were saved by a car-load of Cape Coloured (i. e. half-caste) people, who gave them water and saw them on their way, refusing to accept any payment. None of the white people's cars which they tried to flag down, would stop on either occasion. The last stop before Cape Town was at Somerset West, where Fiona had lived as a teenager. On retiring from India, her parents had bought some land high up the Heldeberg Mountain, and her father had grown several types of fruit trees and had a house built there. Sadly, only weeks before the house was completed, he died. However, for some years the family remained in Somerset West. It is a beautiful part of the country, not far from the Paarl Valley which produces excellent white wine, and the coastline east of Cape Town is as striking as that of the South of France, with the advantage that there were then no villas or hotels to spoil it.

Erik Chishoim welcomed Humphrey very warmly and did everything possible to make the lectures a success. Since Cape Town University was integrated he was able to talk to students of all colours on an equal footing. In Cape Town, they also met the veteran pianist Dr. Elsie Hall, Australian-born but a resident of South Africa for many years. This formidable old lady was in her late eighties, but was still performing and was even then planning a European tour which included East Germany and other countries in the Eastern bloc. It was also interesting for Humphrey to be invited to dinner at the

house of Fiona's old family doctor, an Afrikaaner whose wife spoke very little English, and to feel the atmosphere of an Afrikaans household.

While visiting some of Fiona's friends at Gordon's Bay, near Somerset West, Searle suddenly had an idea for a fifth symphony based on the life of Webern. Possibly the beauty of the mountains encircling the bay had led him to think of Webern, for he had been a great nature-lover and had lived and walked among the mountains of Austria in his youth. Humphrey was oblivious of the conversation going on around him but, by the end of the afternoon, he had worked out the complete plan of the work in his head.

They flew back to Europe at the end of May. As the aeroplane stopped at Luxembourg, they decided to stop off there and spend a few days in this quiet and pleasant city before going on to Frankfurt for the rehearsals of *The Photo of the Colonel*. They explored the countryside of Luxembourg, and enjoyed the excellent food and wine, which was a contrast to the somewhat crude, if copious, fare which was typical of South African restaurants. Then they took the little train which travelled down the Moselle valley towards Frankfurt. Here rehearsals were well under way, with a good cast and quite an adequate production, although the singer who took the part of Berenger found it necessary to make several cuts in his role, especially in his final monologue. The electronic effects were used which had made in the BBC Radiophonic Workshop for the London production, and the opera was quite a success with both public and critics.

They returned to England, but not for long as Humphrey had been invited to attend a congress on modern opera in Hamburg, organized by the enterprising intendant Rolf Liebermann, who commissioned many operas and ballets from contemporary composers during his reign. In connection with the Congress, he put on a fortnight of modern opera and among the operas Searle saw was *The Golden Ram* by Ernst Krenek, in which he was particularly impressed by the performance of the Finnish baritone Tom Krause in the part of Jason. He could not only sing but looked young and athletic and acted well. During the Congress, Liebermann, whom Humphrey had known as a colleague and friend ever since his ISCM days, asked Searle to come and see him. He had heard of the success of *The Photo of the Colonel* at Frankfurt and now wanted to commission an opera.

Humphrey naturally felt flattered. When Searle was asked what ideas he had, he mentioned that he had thought of trying to make Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* into an opera. Liebermann asked if he would be interested in writing an opera on *King Lear* as, apparently, Fischer-Dieskau had said that he would like to play the part in an opera specially written for him. As 1964 was a Shakespeare Centenary year, a publisher had brought out a list of Shakespeare operas, mentioning that Benjamin Britten was at work on a *Lear* opera. Britten said to Humphrey, "Do not set *Lear* as I am going to!" As there was obviously no point in his doing the same, Searle told Liebermann that he would make enquiries on his return to England. Britten never set *Lear*.

When the Searles got back to London, Humphrey found two offers of work waiting for him. Scherchen was arranging a series of programmes on Radio Lugano that winter which were to include all the Beethoven symphonies as well as a new work in each concert, and he wanted Searle to write a short piece for a Beethoven-size orchestra without trombones. And Lawrence Leonard, who had conducted several works of Humphrey's both at Morley College and with the Halle Orchestra, said he wanted to give the first performance of Searle's fifth symphony in Manchester in October. Since the latter request was more urgent, he sat down and wrote the symphony fairly quickly, between June and September 1964.

Humphrey enquired from Britten's publishers whether he was really intending to write an opera on *Lear* and was told that he was. Searle also learnt that Samuel Barber was writing an opera *Antony and Cleopatra*. Then Humphrey suddenly got an idea, Why not *Hamlet*? Practically all the action takes place on stage, apart from one or two scenes, such as Ophelia's description in Act 2 Scene 1 of

her encounter with Hamlet in melancholy mood and the story of the switching of the letters during Hamlet's journey to England, both of which can be dramatised. The only narration which Humphrey retained unaltered was Gertrude's description of the death of Ophelia. At any rate, he communicated his idea to Liebermann, and got a letter back which said, " Hamlet is marvellous. As marvellous as dangerous? Good luck!"

And he recommended Searle to make Hamlet a baritone rather than a tenor, saying tenors are fat and stupid. As Humphrey wanted Tom Krause for the part, he was glad to follow his suggestion. But he could not start work on Hamlet immediately. Apart from the piece for Scherchen, he was committed to translating and editing a selection of Berlioz' letters for one publisher and to translating Walter Kolneder's book on Webern's music for another, thus he could not get to grips with Hamlet until the following spring.

Edith Sitwell, whom Humphrey had not seen for some time, had heard that they were going to America, and asked them to come and see her. She had not been well for some time, and was lying in bed in the Hampstead house where she lived in her later years. Her long pale fingers with their blood-red nails and massive rings were folded over the counterpane. She seemed pleased to see them, but the drugs prescribed by her doctor caused her mind to wander slightly, and she warned her visitors not to let the American professors "bully you ". Humphrey never saw her again as she died of a heart attack only a few months later, apparently after reading a stupid review of one of her books. Usually, her companions prevented such reviews from reaching her, but this time there had been a mistake. Searle was most glad to have known her since she was a distinguished poet and a great lady.

Before they sailed for America, they gave a party to which Patrick and Olwen Wymark came. By a strange coincidence, Olwen's parents were living near Stanford University where her father, Philip Buck, was Professor of Political Science. She wrote to them, and they offered to put the Searles up in a shack at the bottom of their garden until they could find a place of our own. So, at least, they had somewhere they could go to on arrival. At the beginning of September, Fiona received the news that her step-father had died suddenly and they were relieved that they had been able to visit the family in South Africa earlier that year.

Chapter Fourteen

Humphrey and Fiona arrived back to find their Ordnance Hill home in chaos. The 'friend" who was occupying the place had not paid any rent for many months, nor had he paid the bill for the telephone, which had consequently been disconnected. He had also let out part of the property to some actors who had fused all the electric power in the studio and the place was filthy. To make matters worse, Humphrey had two visitors on the morning after they returned. He had been asked to write incidental music for Aeschylus' Prometheus Bound for Stanford University, and the Dutch director, Erik Vos, and the English translator Philip Vellacott both came round to discuss the production. Although it was August, the studio was extremely cold and Searle felt most embarrassed. He eventually obtained a court order against the "friend", but no money came from him. He has since died, unmourned.

Humphrey had been invited by Sir Keith Faulkner, the Director of the Royal College of Music, to join the College's professorial staff in 1964. Searle had been unable to accept because of the visit to Stanford, but he kept the appointment open and started working there in the autumn of 1965. Keith was formerly a singer and a British Council official in Rome and had taught at Cornell University for ten years. He certainly made an enormous difference to the College by starting an electronic studio, a Contemporary Music Workshop, a wind symphony orchestra and a jazz band, and managed to bring the College into the 20th century at last, in contrast to the conservatism of his two immediate predecessors. Humphrey was happy to teach there.

Meanwhile, Searle had started on Hamlet and had worked out a rough libretto while in Mexico. It mostly meant cutting, although he dramatised the two scenes mentioned before. He started on the music in the summer of 1965, while staying with the Schilders and the Weinstocks and based the whole work on a basic series which he derived from the setting of "To be or not to be", and from this series, he drew themes associated with the various characters in the play. Thus the music has a kind of symphonic form and is not purely an accompaniment to the action. It took Searle until early in 1968 to complete the whole opera, in between bouts of other work. In addition to the Prometheus music for Stanford, he had been asked to write a work for the Cork Choral Festival. They had originally wanted it for May 1963, but part of the bargain was that the composer should be present at a seminar at which his or her work was analysed as well as at the performance, which was impossible while he was in Stanford. So he wrote a work for the 1966 Festival instead. Edith Sitwell had died in November 1964 and, in her memory, Humphrey set her poem *The Canticle of the Rose*, a companion poem to *The Shadow of Cain*, but much shorter. This setting was also performed at the 1966 Aldeburgh Festival at a concert given in her honour. Britten, Tippett and Malcolm Williamson had all written settings of other poems of hers.

The Cork Festival is rather a curious one. The concerts are enormously long and contain much folk-song and dance. Performers come not only from Ireland but from all over the world. The enterprising Festival Director, Dr. Aloys Fleischmann, an Irishman in spite of his name, commissions three or four new choral works every year, usually one from Ireland, one from Britain and one or two from Continental composers. These are analysed with great expertise by Dr. Fleischmann in morning seminars and performed in the evenings, often incongruously surrounded by Gaelic piping or Bulgarian folk dancing. The atmosphere is informal and cheerful, and there is usually refreshment after the concerts in the Lord Mayor's Parlour. Distinguished visitors to the Festival in 1966 included Sir Robert and Lady Mayer (she was Dorothy Moulton, the singer); Sir Robert was then in his late 80s, but his wife insisted on him driving the three of us to the concert hall in teeming rain before parking the car. He took it very cheerfully.

Fiona's mother came over from South Africa that year and, in the summer, the trio went to Malta for a short holiday. Although the climate there is splendid, it is not a very interesting island since there are few trees and the food mostly resembles NAAFI rations, but there were good meals at an Italian restaurant somewhat curiously called *The British*. There are, however, many handsome buildings on the island, especially in Valletta and Mdina. 1966 was the year that Britain won the World Soccer Cup, beating Germany in the final. The victory was very popular with the Maltese, who remembered the German bombardment of the island during the war. After the match, Union Jacks were to be seen in all the streets and draped over every car.

Early in 1967, William Glock asked Humphrey to write a vocal work for that year's Proms. He decided to set the lines about the river Oxus which form the epilogue to Matthew Arnold's long narrative poem *Sohrab and Rustum*, preceded by an orchestral passage depicting the battle between the two champions. The composer saw the river as a symbol of life, carrying on despite all the ravages of war.

In the summer, no doubt through the influence of Milhaud, Searle was invited to be a guest composer at the summer festival in Aspen, Colorado. Walter Susskind, who was the chief conductor at the Festival, came to see Humphrey in London and they decided on a programme of some of his works which would be performed there. Susskind was to conduct the 5th symphony, *The Diary of a Madman* and the *Poem for 22 Strings*, while Searle was to conduct *Put away the Flutes* and the *Jocelyn Brooke* songs in the version with chamber ensemble.

Before going to Aspen, Mr and Mrs Searle flew direct to San Francisco and spent three weeks with friends in that area, including a splendid weekend party at Bill and Karen Crawford's rented home at Lafayette. They then flew on to Denver and changed on to a small plane which rose spectacularly

above the mountains towards Aspen, 8,000 feet above sea level. In the winter, Aspen is a well-known ski resort and in the summer a number of students and professors, many from the Juilliard School in New York, but some also from other parts of the States, meet here for summer courses and performances. In the orchestra, the principals are professional players while the students sit in the back desks, but they achieve a very high standard of performance. The presiding genius was Milhaud, assisted by Charles Jones from New York and the atmosphere was cheerful and friendly. Most of the concerts take place in a large tent, which sometimes gets cold at night but *The Diary of a Madman* was given in the 19th century opera house, all plush and velvet and a real period piece. Madeleine Milhaud produced it very ably, and all the singers and the orchestra were students. Humphrey was most impressed. The orchestral performances under Walter Susskind also went well and the whole enterprise was well worth while. Among the musicians Searle met there, was Rolf Persinger, the principal viola of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, and son of the well-known violinist Louis Persinger. They went on a terrifying journey through the mountains with Rolf's wife Arden and their young son, driven in a hired jeep by Agnes Albert, our hostess from San Francisco. The road, which was pretty rough to start with, petered out altogether at the top of the crest (about 14,000 feet high) and we had to scramble down over a series of rocky tracks. Humphrey did not think they were ever going to get home. In later years, they visited the Persingers at their beautiful house at Tiburon, across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco, and they came to London when his orchestra was on a European tour.

During the Aspen season, the Milhauds threw several large parties for the students and visiting musicians. At one of these, Madeleine noticed that Fiona was wearing a miniature gold cable car on a chain around her neck, together with a small crucifix and St. Christopher medal. "Quel sacrilege!" said Madeleine, "to wear that thing with your cross and medal". "Nonsense", retorted Fiona, "the cable cars are pretty miraculous themselves. Besides, it was a present from Alta, a very good friend of mine". Madeleine said nothing more, but the following evening at yet another party they were giving, she beckoned Fiona over and handed her a jeweller's box which contained a small gold aspen leaf. "If you can wear that vulgar thing around your neck chérie, you shall also wear this in memory of your time in Aspen." Fiona was delighted and wore it regularly.

From Aspen, the Searles flew to New York, and thence to London for the first performance of *Oxus* at the Proms, with the excellent Gerald English as the soloist. After that, Humphrey was asked by Liebermann to go to Hamburg and play *Hamlet* through to the singers who were going to perform it. By then, the first two acts were written and the first scene of the third. Fortunately, Tom Krause was free to undertake the title role, and Liebermann had assembled a strong cast, with Ronald Dowd as Claudius and Kerstin Meyer as Gertrude, Ophelia was sung by Sylvia Anderson, the American wife of Matthias Kuntzsch who was to conduct the premiere. The fact that none of the singers appeared to be horrified by the music augured well for the performance. It was agreed that the opera should be sung in German. Hans Keller and Paul Hamburger made a good singing version based on the well-known Schlegel translation. Searle had a meeting in London with the director, August Everding, then of the Munich Kammerspiele, and, later, to succeed Liebermann as Intendant of the Hamburg Opera, and the young Swiss designer, Toni Businger, who was responsible for the sets and costumes. Meanwhile, Humphrey was working hard to get the full score finished, which he managed to do by the end of January 1968 and the Hamburg production was billed for the following March.

While he was in Hamburg, the BBC had decided to put on a concert of his chamber and choral music in the Concert Hall at Broadcasting House and asked him to write a new piece for chamber ensemble for the occasion and he wrote a piece called *Progressions*, which begins slowly but gradually increases in speed towards a central climax. Here he inserted some of the new effects for woodwind, chords and harmonies, described by Bartolozzi in his book *New Sounds for Woodwinds*, but he subsequently replaced these by a more normal improvised cadenza for wind instruments. When Peter Mennin, the director of the Juilliard School of Music in New York, later asked Searle to write a larger chamber work for his school, Humphrey flanked *Progressions* with two further movements, *Themes*

and Contrasts, making the work into a Sinfonietta for chamber ensemble which was first performed at the Juilliard School in May 1970, apparently with success.

Searle returned to Hamburg for the final rehearsals of Hamlet. The costumes were all in black and white, and so were the sets, which were ingenious, if somewhat clinical. Revolving panels had mirrors on one side and these were most effective in the play scene, when they were lit up by torches held by the courtiers. Both Tom Krause and the Laertes, Willy Hartmann, were expert fencers; the latter was indeed the fencing champion of Denmark at the time and so the duel scene in the last act was considerably extended. Had Humphrey known about this in advance, he would have written some extra music for it, instead of having several bars repeated many times, but, by the time he got to Hamburg, it was too late to make changes. However, the duel was most exciting visually. The first performance was sold out; it went extremely well and was a success with the public. The reactions of the critics were mixed, the English ones being more enthusiastic than the Germans who are inclined to regard Shakespeare as their own property. Tom Krause was too exhausted to sing in the second performance two days later (it is a very long part) so the Searles went off to Paris and returned in the summer to see another performance. Liebermann kept the opera in the repertoire for quite some time, and included it in the 1969 ISCM Festival in Hamburg.

Meanwhile, Humphrey Searle had been approached by the writer Heike Doutine, who lived in Hamburg, to collaborate with her in a ballet for which she had written the scenario about the letters of the alphabet and their behaviour in different circumstances, which sounds a bit unpromising but could have been quite dramatic. Heike, of Huguenot extraction, was known as a poet when she was young. In Hamburg, Searle had several meetings with her and her husband Marcus Scholz, a TV producer. Over the next few years, they explored the possibilities of getting the ballet put on, but the chief problem was to find a choreographer who could tackle the fairly elaborate scenario. Eventually, they found a choreographer from the Royal Ballet who was willing to undertake it and all concerned went over to Paris to see Liebermann, who by this time had become the Director of the Paris Opera. A date was fixed for the first performance to take place in Hamburg, the money for the production was found but, when the stage technicians refused to work overtime on a new production, the whole project collapsed. Fiona and Humphrey remained friends of Heike and Marcus and saw each other often in Hamburg, London and elsewhere. Heike wrote several novels, some of which have been translated into English, including one called A German Requiem.

When Sir Georg Solti at Covent Garden. he saw a piano score of Hamlet and is reputed to have said, "I can't read it, but I like it", and Covent Garden decided to put it on in the spring of 1969. A slight contretemps followed. In the summer of 1968 as the Hamburg Opera Company were coming to the Edinburgh Festival and intended to bring both Sandy Goehr's Arden Must Die and Searle's Hamlet with them. Naturally, Covent Garden wanted to have the first British performance of Hamlet and Humphrey was torn between loyalties to Liebermann, who after all had commissioned the work, and the desire to have a work on a Shakespearian text performed in English at a premier opera house. Eventually, the problem was solved by the fact that the Hamburg decor for both operas was too large to fit the stage of the King's Theatre, that bugbear of many Edinburgh Festivals, and the Hamburg company substituted other operas.

In the summer of 1968, Fiona, her mother (who spoke perfect French) and Humphrey spent a pleasant holiday at a village in Provence, and he began revising Hamlet for the Covent Garden production. While there we heard the appalling news of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia and the crushing of Dubcek's Prague Spring. Apart from feeling enormous sympathy for the unhappy Czechs, Searle was personally involved, as he had been invited to go to Budapest in the autumn to see Sandor Szokolay's Hamlet, and Hungarian troops were participating, probably rather reluctantly, in the

invasion. As he felt he could not go to Budapest while Hungarian troops were on Czech soil, he put off the visit.

Anthony Besch, who had produced *The Diary of a Madman* at Sadler's Wells in 1960, had been invited to direct the Opera School at the Toronto Royal Conservatory for the winter of 1968-9, and he proposed to put on the first English language performance of *Hamlet* in February. Covent Garden did not object to being anticipated, perhaps because Toronto is a long way away, and because it was being performed by students. Anthony was keen that Searle should go over for the production but there was a question of raising the money for the fare. Fortunately, Besch was able to arrange some lectures for him and he was also helped by an old friend, Hugh Davidson, whom he had met many years earlier through Gordon Watson. Hugh, by this time, had risen to an important position in the CBC in Toronto, and he not only promised Searle some broadcasts but invited the Searles to stay in his house there. And so they were able to go.

Humphrey did not like Toronto very much. It seemed rather flat and provincial and, in February, it was freezing cold. However, the Searles were given generous hospitality and were made to feel welcome by many friends. On their first Saturday night in Toronto, Hugh's house was burgled while everyone was out and a number of things were stolen including Fiona's passport. They were just reporting this to the British Consul in some agitation, as they were intending to visit the USA on the way home, when a smiling Negro appeared with the missing passport; apparently he had found it discarded on a rubbish dump a mile away from the house, and he had discovered the relevant address from the visa inside it. Although the next day was Sunday, Hugh actually managed to get a glazier round to repair the damage caused by the burglar, which would have been unthinkable in England. Humphrey and Fiona had to go out again that evening and, when they returned, found that the house had been burgled again before the putty had had time to dry. Some of the property was later recovered and the thief, who turned out to be a 15 year-old boy, was caught.

Among old friends, Humphrey met Dr. Boyd Neel, who had conducted the first English performance of the *Poem for 22 Strings* at the Cheltenham Festival in 1951, and was now Dean of the Conservatory, and among new encounters was with the very gifted Canadian composer, Harry Somers and his wife Barbara and a long evening was spent at their house in a discussion about modern music which was recorded by the CBC. At the Conservatory, the rehearsals went well. *Hamlet* was sung by a young professional baritone from New Zealand, Donald Rutherford, but the other parts were sung by students, with the exception of the veteran Welsh singer Howell Glynne, who was then a member of the Faculty and who took the part of the Ghost, singing off-stage while a vast projection of the head of *Hamlet's* father appeared on the backcloth. The conductor was the excellent Victor Feldbrill. The only difficulty in casting was with *Osric*, a part which calls for a high tenor, and there was none in the Opera School. Searle suggested that the part might be taken by a counter-tenor, and there was one, a tall slim negro who appeared in an elegant white suit and a cowboy hat. John Stoddard designed a very effective permanent set and costumes which were described as Elizabethan mod, being mostly black and white and with a good deal of use of furs, which certainly emphasised the chilly atmosphere of *Elsinore*.

The performances went very well and there was an excellent *Ophelia* in Ricky Turovsky. There was a double cast for most of the parts and it was astonishing what the students achieved in a work which is not at all easy. The audiences seemed to like it and the performances were well attended.

William Mann, then the chief music critic of the *London Times*, was in the USA at the time. He came to the first night of *Hamlet* in Toronto and later wrote a very good notice of it, as he had done of the Hamburg performance. Before the Searles left Toronto, Hugh Davidson drove them to see the Niagara Falls, a truly awe-inspiring sight, especially as in mid-winter when the falls were half frozen over.

Arthur Schilder's job had been moved from California to Maryland, about 40 miles south of Washington and Humphrey discovered that it would cost very little more to return to London via Washington than if they flew direct. So they took the opportunity of spending ten days with the Schilders in their new home in tobacco country, very different from the Californian landscape, but extremely agreeable in its way. The Schilders had already made many new friends there, some of them from the U. S. naval base at Annapolis and the Searles were lavishly entertained and it was marvellous for them to see old friends again.

Back in London, preparations were being made for the Covent Garden production of Hamlet. As Tom Krause was not available, the Canadian baritone Victor Braun had been engaged to sing Hamlet, with Donald Rutherford as his understudy. Ronald Dowd was Claudius, as in Hamburg, Patricia Johnson was Gertrude and Anne Howells, Ophelia. - Laertes was David Hughes, a pop singer who had transferred to opera with admirable results but, unfortunately, he died very young. The conductor was Edward Downes, a former pupil of Scherchen whom Humphrey had known for many years. As producer, Searle suggested Donald McWhinnie, with whom he had worked several times for TV and radio and also in his stage production of The Duchess of Malfi for the Royal Shakespeare Company. Donald brought in the experienced artist Leslie Hurry to design the decor and costumes. He had already designed Hamlet as a play and as a ballet, but the operatic dimension was new for him. He constructed a permanent set which proved very satisfactory and included projections on the backcloth.

Together with Donald McWhinnie and Edward Downes, Humphrey had been asked to give a preliminary talk on Hamlet to the Friends of Covent Garden, who had provided some of the money for the production. He had expected about twenty or thirty people to turn up, as is usual on such occasions, and was alarmed to find the Opera House completely packed! He spoke for a short time, Donald spoke for an even shorter time, and then Edward Downes made up for this brevity by running through a good deal of the opera, with extracts sung by some of the cast with piano. Humphrey went to most of the final rehearsals with stage and orchestra. Donald Rutherford sat in on most of them, but one day Searle was worried to find that he was not there. He had had the bad luck to be stricken with encephalitis. However, Victor Braun seemed to be in good voice, and all went well up to the end of the final rehearsal. The first night also went well and was a success. But afterwards it was clear that Victor Braun was losing his voice, although he insisted on finishing his performance. After it, he immediately flew to Munich to see his doctor.

Covent Garden had planned six performances of the opera and everyone was on tenterhooks to hear when Victor Braun would be well enough to sing. It was out of the question, of course, for Donald Rutherford to perform, and nobody else knew the part except Tom Krause, who was in America. Three performances were cancelled. "Not To Be" was the headline in one newspaper and then it was announced that Victor Braun would be returning to London to sing in the fifth planned performance. By the end of the first act, at the point where Hamlet has to sing a high G flat on the words "O vengeance!" it was clear that all was not well with his voice. But he continued to the end of the act and everyone trooped out for the interval. When returned to seats, with the orchestra in place, the curtain did not go up. Instead, Edward Downes walked on in front of it and announced that Victor Braun's voice had gone and that the rest of the performance would have to be cancelled and, of course, the sixth performance also had to be cancelled. The Searles had asked some friends in the audience to go their house after the show, but they were put off, and Donald McWhinnie, Fiona and Humphrey drowned their sorrows as best they could, with the slight consolation that, as Edward Downes said that Covent Garden might be able to revive Hamlet two years later. All the same, to have had three different productions of Hamlet within a year was very fortunate.

Chapter fifteen

To coincide with the Covent Garden production of Hamlet, the Musical Times published an interview in which Humphrey answered questions put by Martin Kingsbury and he was asked to write a short choral piece which would be published as a supplement. Irene Nicholson had recently died, after a long illness bravely borne, and in her memory, Searle set another of her translations of Mexican poems, this time not a Nahuatl poem but an extract from the Spanish miracle play *The Divine Narcissus* by the 17th-century nun Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz: Tell me, where is He my soul adores, a very beautiful poem. At about the same time, Humphrey was asked to write a song with French words for the Romanian singer Viorica Cortez, who was then singing *Carmen* at Covent Garden. He happened to have just come across Rimbaud's early poem *Ophelie*, which he did not remember having read before and so choose that.

In the summer, Humphrey and Fiona went to Hamburg for the ISCM Festival which included a performance of *Hamlet*. The music in the orchestral concerts was mostly rather dreary, and Searle did not like Penderecki's opera *The Devils* at all, but was interested to see Sandy Goehr's *Arden*, which struck him as being very successful. Sandy was not there, but his wife, Audrey told Humphrey that the opera had been put on without any rehearsal, and the orchestral playing naturally suffered. That is the trouble with an opera house which has such an enormous repertoire as Hamburg had at that time. A later performance of *Arden* which Humphrey saw in London was far better musically, even if the staging was inferior. From Hamburg, Searle went first to Rudesheim, where the Jungs gave a splendid party on the top of the medieval tower which forms part of their house, with wine from their own vineyard, and then to Karlsruhe, where he had a teaching position at the *Rochschule für Musik* for some years.

He had been awarded a C. B. E. in 1968 but was not really interested in awards of this kind but Fiona and one or two friends persuaded him that the honour was as much for music and the arts as for him personally, so he did not refuse it. But about the same time, he was given an honour which interested him much more being elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Music which was something of a bonus for someone who had had only nine months' musical training in the whole of his life. There were only 125 such Fellows at that time.

In August, the Searles went to Cyprus, their first visit to this beautiful and fascinating island. His friend Robin Russell, the former editor of the now defunct *Times of Cyprus*, gave them introductions to one member each of three different communities, Wally Kent, a British journalist, Charles Papadopolos, a Greek Cypriot member of the Cyprus Broadcasting Service, and Ali Fehmi, the Turkish Press Attache. This was, of course, years before the Turkish invasion of the north of the island and they were able to travel everywhere freely. They stayed first in the *Ledra Hotel* in Nicosia, then the haunt of all the journalists, and, later, they hired a car and drove round much of the island. They visited Famagusta, but found it rather depressing, apart from the old town, though the ruins of Salamis to the north were most interesting. But the place they really loved was Kyrenia and they stayed at the *Hesperides Hotel* and got to know its proprietor Anastasy Kariolou, which was much nicer than the fashionable *Dome Hotel* opposite. In the early mornings, while everything was quiet and the atmosphere was unbelievably calm and peaceful in the beautiful harbour, they used to swim and water-ski. Through Wally Kent they met the Drs. Guthrie who had both retired from medical practice. John Guthrie, a big bearded man who strongly resembles James Robertson Justice, is an interesting composer, especially of songs, while his wife Vivian is a talented artist, using broken glass and other materials to produce remarkable results. They had a beautiful villa in the village of Bellapais in the mountains above Kyrenia. Bellapais, with its ruined medieval abbey, is a most attractive place and in its main square is the *Tree of Idleness* immortalised by Lawrence Durrell in *Bitter Lemons*. Durrell had a house in Bellapais at one time. This was the first of several trips to Cyprus, and they remained good friends of the Guthries.

In October 1969, as part of British Trade Week in Vienna, the British Council organised a British Arts Week, sending out the Royal Ballet, the Royal Shakespeare Company and various musical ensembles, as well as a number of British composers, such as David Bedford, Harrison Birtwhistle, Peter Maxwell Davies and Searle. Some modern British chamber works were performed including Humphrey's quartet for two wind instruments and two string instruments Op 12, which he had written as long ago as 1948. The British Council also asked him to write a new piece for the Purcell Consort of Voices and he chose an amusing and rather bawdy poem about a young man, a girl and a pear tree from Faber's book of Medieval English Lyrics called I have a new garden. This seemed to go down well, but it would have been better if the glossary which Humphrey had included in the score to explain the more obscure words had also been printed in the programme. He also took part in a discussion about Schoenberg, Berg and Webern and their influence on British music.

From Vienna, Mr and Mrs Searle went on to Budapest, where Szokolay's Hamlet was being performed. Humphrey felt he could now go with a clear conscience, as Hungarian troops had been withdrawn from Czechoslovakia. Apart from Hamlet, they saw two interesting earlier Hungarian operas, Erkel's Hunyadi Laszlo and Kodaly's Hary Janos which was great fun. Humphrey gave a talk on Liszt in England at the British Embassy which was attended by a large number of Hungarian musicians. The British Cultural Attache, Charles Hewer, and his Norwegian wife looked after the Searles extremely well and, one day, they were driven to Esztergom to see the Romanesque basilica for the opening of which, in 1855, Liszt had written his Gran Mass.

During the winter of 1969, Humphrey Searle was engaged on a large work which Douglas Cleverdon had persuaded the BBC to commission from him, a spoken oratorio based on Blake's Jerusalem which was not the famous poem which Parry set, but which Searle did make a setting of as an epilogue in his work, but from the big prophetic book, Milton, very much shortened, of course. Most of the words are spoken over music by a cast of actors, although Humphrey set the actual poems to be sung. The prologue Reader! lover of books! lover of heaven! is an aria for tenor and orchestra, and so is I saw a monk of Charlemaine. The long poem which begins The fields from Islington to Marylbone is set for chorus and orchestra, with a tenor solo in the middle, and the chorus sing the two final poems, England! awake! and And did those feet. As usual, Douglas set recording and transmission dates which Searle had to keep to, and the whole work, which lasts about an hour, was written between December 1969 and February 1970. The vocal and orchestral music were recorded separately, and then the purely orchestral music by itself. The actors recorded their parts to the tape of the music, taking their cues from green lights. This was less satisfactory than the old method in which the orchestra sits in the studio and the cast take their cues from the conductor, but, of course, it is less expensive. It had a good cast including Carleton Hobbs, Denis Goacher, Margaret Wolfitt and Ronald Dowd as the tenor soloist. Sir Geoffrey Keynes, perhaps the greatest authority on Blake, recorded a short talk explaining the somewhat obscure symbolism of the poem. It was a work Humphrey had always wanted to set, with its marvellous and exciting imagery, and its outspoken attack on materialism and war, and he was very glad to have had the opportunity.

Humphrey and Fiona went back to Cyprus in April 1970, staying again at the Hesperides Hotel in Kyrenia. Although the spring flowers made the island more beautiful than ever, it was really too early in the season. It was very windy, and the boat they had used the previous year had been smashed up by some youths. However, they visited the south part of the island with their friend Hazel Thurston, a tall and amusing Irish lady who had come to Cyprus to revise her guide book on the island. They shared a hair-raising drive in an ancient taxi from Nicosia to Limassol. The driver seemed hell-bent on exceeding 100 miles an hour. Fiona, in a desperate attempt to check the driver's speed, stuffed a cushion up her dress and drew the man's attention to her supposed pregnant condition. The driver grinned understandingly and slowed down to a mere 90 miles an hour. At Limassol, they were thankful to change taxis and were driven to Paphos, where they saw the famous Roman mosaics, not all of which had yet been excavated. Then they hired a car and Fiona drove across the Troodos mountains to Nicosia. Hazel wanted to visit a small but beautiful church hidden high up in the

mountains, and the road to it was practically impassable, very stony and had a deep precipice on one side. They all survived these somewhat frightening experiences!

Michael Bakewell, who was then Director of Plays at BBC Television, suggested that Humphrey might collaborate with Samuel Beckett on a new opera for television. As Searle was intending to go to Paris to meet the Crostens, who were passing through that city on their way back from one of the European campuses which belonged to Stanford, Humphrey asked Barbara Bray, who he knew was a good friend of Beckett, if she could arrange an introduction. She sent Searle a message that he would like to meet him and he came round to their hotel, which was not far from his own apartment in Montparnasse. Both he and Humphrey were rather shy and it was left to Fiona to carry on an animated monologue. In the end, Beckett asked the Searles to have dinner with him at his favourite restaurant in the area, and it was a most amusing evening. It turned out that Beckett had no ideas for further theatrical work. He was writing only poems at the time, but he asked Humphrey if he could help his nephew Edward Beckett, who is a flute player and a pupil of the famous master Rampal and who had recently graduated with honours from the Paris Conservatoire. Searle was able to put him in touch with the manager of the Sinfonia of London, his old friend Edward Walker and, although both he and his son are both flautists, he managed to get Edward Beckett some work as well and this was the beginning of his successful career in England and Ireland.

Humphrey did eventually collaborate with Samuel Beckett, although a cousin of his, John Beckett, had written the music for most of Sam's radio plays, Searle was asked by the Audio-Visual Centre of London University to write music for both *Words and Music* and *Cascando*. The author was satisfied with the results.

When back in London, Humphrey was asked to write a new work for the Cheltenham Festival which had to be for the 18th century combination of two oboes, two horns and strings. He decided on a set of variations and, when he had sketched out the work, he suddenly realised that the individual variations resembled the signs of the Zodiac in character, as described in astrological handbooks, such as Capricorn, prudence, understanding. It made a musical form which reached its climax in Scorpio, strong-willed, self-destructive and ended quietly with Sagittarius, reason and intellect. The composer used fairly spare textures for the strings and gave the horns some difficult parts with which, however, the young players of the Orchestra Nova coped very well. Searle stationed one oboe and one horn on each side of the strings, hoping to achieve a quasi-stereophonic effect, but the acoustics of Cheltenham Town Hall were not helpful.

The BBC revived *Oxus*, the magnificent scena for high voice and orchestra at the Proms on 26 August, his 55th birthday. Gerald English was again the excellent soloist this time singing the part from memory. Then, in September, Humphrey and Fiona went to America again. The BBC Club had arranged a charter flight to Philadelphia for £60 return, and so they decided on a three week stay. The Schilders met them at the airport and drove down to their new home in Maryland. This was Deep Falls in Charles County, a large 18th-century mansion set in rolling countryside which even had its own private family graveyard. Unfortunately, Humphrey had to continue working. The Scottish Theatre Ballet was putting on a new production of *Giselle* and wanted to get back to Adam's original score without the various interpolations and accretions which have gradually crept into it over the years since the first performance. Peter Darrell, the choreographer, even cut out the well-known Peasant Duet in Act 1, which is by Burgmuller and not Adam. Luckily, the BBC had a photostat of the original Paris score which Humphrey was able to use but the Scottish Ballet could only afford an orchestra of 15 at the time, which made the music spare and incisive, but rather lacking in string tone. The weather in Maryland was fine, and Humphrey sat on the verandah at Deep Falls in blazing sunshine working on the score, while Arthur Schilder was out at work. In the evenings there was splendid entertainment by the Schilders' many friends, the Marylanders and Virginians being just as hospitable as the Californians.

Humphrey and Fiona paid a brief visit to New Orleans, staying on the edge of the 18th-century French Quarter. Here they not only enjoyed the delicious seafood and Creole dishes, but visited the famous Preservation Hall. For a dollar each, they sat on rough benches and listened to the traditional jazz of the 20's played and sung by elderly negroes of both sexes, who performed for twenty minutes at a time and with great gusto and enjoyment before retiring for a short interval, during which they no doubt had a drink or a puff of marijuana before returning with unabated energy for their next number. The Searles also went on a paddle-steamer through the tropical bayous, where they made contact with the Deep South and viewed the muddy waters of the Mississippi. The French Quarter, with its latticed iron balconies, was preserved exactly as it was and it still gave the feeling of old Louisiana before the Purchase, in spite of the teeming tourists.

Hamlet was revived at Covent Garden in the spring of 1971. Victor Braun had said that he would like to sing the name part again but, at the last moment, he threw up the role. Luckily, Donald Rutherford was available and although he admitted that his voice was not really big enough for Covent Garden, he coped manfully with the part. The remainder of the cast were as in 1969, with the exception of an old friend Inia te Wiata ("Happy" to his friends) who had died. As before, the notices were mixed, but at least it was regarded as a serious new work and received widespread attention. This time four performances were managed..

In the spring, Mr and Mrs Searle visited Malcolm Arnold and his second wife Isobel, with their young son Edward, at their Cornish home near Padstow. Malcolm took his visitors to see the May Day processions in Padstow, with their links with ancient pagan rites and their splendid May Day song. While Humphrey was there, he wrote a new setting of Chesterton's *The Donkey* for Owen Brannigan as he wanted something less conventional than those he was used to. Unfortunately, he died before he was able to learn it. Malcolm was very pleased at having been made a Cornish bard although a "furriner", as he comes from Northampton and his *Cornish Dances* and *Padstow Lifeboat* are splendid tributes to his adopted county.

Sir Keith Falkner was a member of the committee which organised the Royal Concert, an annual affair designed to raise money for musical charities and patronised by the Royal Family. He had suggested that a different British composer should be commissioned to write a new orchestral work each year for it and, in 1971, the choice fell to Searle. Instead of loyal fanfares, he decided to write a work based on Michael Ayrton's autobiography of Daedalus, *The Maze Maker*, an extraordinary piece of imaginative writing. Musically, the work is a rondo, in that the maze music returns between the other episodes, but the music also follows the other events in the story, such as the copulation of Pasiphae and the Bull, the birth of the Minotaur, Daedalus' and Icarus' flight to Cumae, and so on.

Each of the British Orchestras takes it in turn to give their services for the Royal Concert, and this year it was the turn of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Searles work was in fact commissioned by the Feeney Trust, which has done so much to help British composers, and the first performance took place in Birmingham in November and repeated a few days later at the Royal Concert in London at the Festival Hall. The orchestra played very well under the French conductor Louis Fremaux. The Royal Concert audience was quite different from the appreciative Birmingham one, consisting mostly of Society ladies who wanted to do their bit for charity, especially in the presence of a Royal Personage. Princess Anne was present on this occasion although she looked bored. Michael and Elisabeth Ayrton shared a box with the Searles, and all lined up to be presented to the Princess before the concert. She went straight down the line to Michael, having seen him on television, and they had quite a long conversation in the course of which she mentioned that her father liked to paint. "These Amateurs!" said Michael.

Humphrey did not know what the Princess thought of his piece, as it came after the interval, but Keith Falkner told him afterwards of a conversation in the Royal Box in which the lady-in-waiting

announced, "I never want to hear that piece again". "On the contrary", said Keith, "I would like to hear it again straight away".

During this period, Humphrey had regular meetings on Sunday evenings with Basil Dean as they lived only just round the corner from his house in Norfolk Road, and Humphrey and his wife often visited his beautiful garden of which he was justly proud. They introduced him to another friend with a lovely house and garden, Helen Letts, the widow of Kenneth Letts of the diary firm, who lived in Elm Tree Road, near Lord's cricket ground, and the four of them, sometimes joined by other friends, had many pleasant "soirees" (as he called them) at one or other of each others houses. Basil was writing his memoirs at the time which eventually appeared in two volumes, as *Seven Ages and Mind's Eye*. He asked Searle to read each chapter as it was typed and he was able to help him with some suggestions and, in return, his friends presented the Searles with signed proof copies of both volumes. It is absurd to recall that, when he was well into his eighties, he was turned out of his house by his landlords, who wanted to pull it down. Admittedly, the other half of his semi-detached Regency house, which had been occupied by Larry Adler, had been left empty for many years and was in a parlous condition but it was felt that such drastic action was unnecessary. Basil's magnificent garden was destroyed too and he had to move to a flat near Baker Street Station which he professed to dislike intensely. He lived to the age of 89 in spite of having been knocked down by a car two years previously. A lot of actors suffered from his dictatorial methods of rehearsal but he had mellowed a great deal by the time Humphrey got to know him and liked him very much, and enjoyed his racy memoirs of the theatre. Searle was also glad to meet his daughter Tessa, his eldest son Winton, the expert on Handel opera and many other branches of music, and his lawyer sons, Martin and Joe.

Fiona's mother Mollie was not at all well at this time. She was in and out of hospital with a disease that was eventually diagnosed as cancer. She had to give up her room in Hampstead, as she could no longer cope by herself. It was difficult for Humphrey and Fiona to have anybody to stay for more than a few days at Ordnance Hill, as the only spare room is a kind of passage-way leading to the studio where he worked. However, as his mother, who was in her eighties, had vacated her flat in North Oxford and moved into a home for elderly people, Searle was able to go down there from time to time and allow Fiona to have Mollie to stay at Ordnance Hill.

He was working on a Fantasy for cello and piano which his old friend Alun Hoddinott had commissioned for the Cardiff Festival of 20th Century Music, which took place in March 1972, and managed to finish it in Oxford. It was clear by this time that Mollie did not have much longer to live. Fiona was reluctant to leave her for even one night, but the Matron at the hospital persuaded her to join her husband in Cardiff for the performance. When they returned from Cardiff, they went straight to the hospital. Mollie suddenly opened her eyes and said to Humphrey, "I have been to such a beautiful place. Why did I have to come back?" Her death the next evening, on 20 March 1972, was evidently peaceful.

Shortly afterwards, Searle was asked by the organisers of the Bath Festival to write a work for singer, horn and piano, to be performed by Gerald English, Barry Tuckwell and Margaret Kitchin. Humphrey had always been attracted by Baudelaire's poetry and he set four poems from *Les Fleurs du Mal*: *A une Dame Creole*, *Sisina*, *Obsession* and *l'Horloge*, forming a kind of small cantata. The performance, in May 1972, went very well, and there have been quite a few performances of the work since. One critic remarked that it sounded very French, although it is not a pastiche of any of the French masters. It used the twelve-tone technique in a fairly free way, a method which he had used in several of his works at the time.

They were saddened about this time by the death of Alan Rawsthorne, whom they used to see quite frequently at the George or the M. L. Club. He had not been well and had been forbidden by his doctor to drink any alcohol except wine, which he did not decline. He was always cheerful. Kenneth Clark's TV series "Civilisation" had just been published in book form, and he insisted on buying a

copy of it for Fiona. He escorted her from the M. L. to Mowbray's Bookshop next door and, instead of giving the assistant a cheque for the book, he emptied his pockets to raise the required sum which left him almost destitute, with 7d to be exact, and so Fiona promptly walked him back to the M. L. and bought him a drink. Alan's friends missed him very much with his pawky sense of humour which was most salutary and he was a sincere and honest musician in the best meaning of the term. Although his works are rather out of fashion at present, but there may be a Rawsthorne revival before long. He had intended to rewrite his *Kubla Khan* but never did so, and it was not until after his death that Humphrey felt free to begin his own setting of the poem.

In September, the Searles went to Switzerland and France, this time by train. The Milhauds had found life in Paris too hectic for them and had gone to live in Geneva in a somewhat clinical apartment near the park. Milhaud's 80th birthday fell on 4 September, and Humphrey wanted to pay homage to him on the occasion. They spent a very unpleasant night in Dijon, where the cooking certainly failed to live up to the standard of the French Resistance banquet which Humphrey had attended there in 1955. On the following day, he did not realise that only certain carriages on the train went through to Geneva, and they were deposited at a singularly dreary place on the Franco-Swiss frontier called Annemasse. After several hours delay, they reached Geneva where Madeleine Milhaud gave them a splendid meal on the night before Darius' birthday. After this, Milhaud, who was tired, lay down on a hard wooden settee for a short time suddenly looking very defenceless and innocent. He spent most of his birthday working as usual. He was writing a cantata on a text by a Polish survivor of the concentration camps. The Milhauds gave a small party in the early evening for various friends and then went on to what was a hilarious evening with Arthur Rubenstein and other old friends. This was the last time that Humphrey saw Milhaud as he died two years later. Humphrey was always glad to have known him. His wit and his combination of genius with gentleness, modesty and helpfulness to others is very rare among important composers.

The travellers continued their journey to Provence, where they again stayed at the little village of Bagnols-en-Forêt, this time at a villa rented by friends. Their hostess, who had sprained her leg and was unable to walk was extremely garrulous, and was her husband, and so Mr and Mrs Searle made frequent visits to the village café.

About this time, Humphrey began his setting of *Kubla Khan*, which took him some time to finish. He wrote it for mixed chorus and large orchestra, with a short tenor solo in the damsel with a dulcimer passage. He tried to make it as colourful and dramatic as possible, and he believed it is one of the best things he had done but, as no one had commissioned it, he found it difficult to get it performed, British choral societies being rather conservative. The premiere eventually took place at an American university,

Alun Hoddinott commissioned Searle to write another work for Cardiff University, this time for organ. In spite of his organ lessons at school with George Dyson, he had never really liked or got on with the instrument. His short *Toccata alla Passacaglia* for organ of 1957 was written in rather a hurry for a recital which never took place, and he was not very pleased with it. This time he decided to write a larger piece which would be fairly brilliant in a rather more advanced style, and to get away from the ecclesiastical atmosphere usually associated with this instrument. The result was the *Fantasy Toccata* of 1973 which was first played by the young Welsh organist Huw Tregelles Williams on the modern 2-manual organ in the Concert Hall of Cardiff University. This organ has a very brilliant tone, and the piece came off well. Since then it has been taken up by other organists, including Jennifer Bate and the 21-year-old Pamela Decker of Stanford, California, who mastered its difficulties with great aplomb.

One day, Humphrey and his wife were having lunch at an Italian restaurant in St. Martin's Lane where it was the custom for the ladies to be presented with a carnation on leaving. Cheered by this, and no doubt fortified by good Italian wine, they walked into the Renault showrooms in the same street, and

Fiona, who had recently been sent some money from her late father's estate, decided to buy a Renault 4, the first new car she had ever had.

They agreed to go on a motoring tour of Belgium and France, beginning with a visit to Humphrey's Belgian cousins at Mirwart in the Ardennes. When they reached the village at lunchtime on the second day's drive, Fiona asked her husband to show her the way to the cousins' country cottage and was somewhat alarmed when he pointed to a vast mansion up the hill overlooking the village. The original chateau dated back to the Middle Ages and there are still dungeons underneath the house which belong to that period. The present chateau was built about 1720 in classical 18th century style. After grandfather Schlich's death, the ownership reverted to the Belgian branch of the family. In both World Wars, it was occupied by German troops but his cousins managed to conceal their wine cellar from the invaders by hiding it under a concrete floor.

After the Second World War, the family could no longer afford to keep up the insurance payments on the house, which with its huge rooms and wooden panels would have burnt like matchwood in a fire. They persuaded the state of Luxembourg, the Belgian province, not the Grand Duchy, to take over its ownership provided that the family had the use of it in the summer months during the lifetime of its oldest member, a lady of about 70 at that time. The state authorities could hardly foresee that she would live to be 102! It was she who greeted the Searles when they arrived. As was customary in Humphreys grandfather's day, there was a large family party staying at the chateau, and twenty three people representing five generations sat down to lunch together. The copious array of servants who used to wait at table in the old days had of course disappeared, but a married couple from the village, with some assistance from local girls, coped very well. Fiona was intrigued by the ramifications of such a large family and, having found out the relationships between all of them, she was able to brief her husband before each meal as to who each of his relations was! Everyone was entertained by cousins Jules and Albert for the few days the Searle stayed there and had some beautiful drives through woods that had been planted by his grandfather.

After this pleasant visit, they drove south to Frejus. Here they were welcomed by Ken and Trixie Buckel, a retired naval commander and his wife to whom they had been given an introduction by a friend. They owned two or three caravan sites at Le Pin de la Legue, near Frejus, and kindly offered the Searles the use of one of them. Each caravan was surrounded by its own patch of trees, giving the occupants a fair amount of privacy, and there were shops, restaurants and swimming-pools a few minutes walk away through the pine trees. They enjoyed their stay very much.

On the way back, they stayed at Fontainebleau, where a drunken Australian broke a window on the fourth floor of the hotel, showering Fiona's new car with jagged glass. On discovering this the next morning, she was naturally incensed and complained to the hotel manager. He informed her that the culprit had checked out leaving his name and address as John Smith, Australia, and so any hopes of compensation were slim. From there, they drove to St. Germain-en-Laye for a few nights. Here they left the car and went into Paris by the newly opened Metro extension. They saw Stephen Wendt and his willowy blonde wife Alison, soon, alas, to die of some incurable disease which she had bravely concealed from the world. They also saw Barbara Bray, who was working with Harold Pinter on a script for a projected film of Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, an impossible task, one might think, especially as the script contains no monologue, which the director, Joseph Losey, intended to replace with atmospheric photography and music. Barbara had suggested to him that Humphrey should write the music. When he showed Searle the script he was astonished at how well it had been done, and Humphrey was soon sketching out the Vinteuil sonata and septet mentioned in the book. The 'petite phrase' gave him trouble, especially as its various appearances of it are so minutely described by Proust, There are some suggestions about what melody he had in mind, such as a theme from Saint-Saens' first violin Sonata or an early work by Faure and so Humphrey thought it best to write his own theme. He made no attempt to write a pastiche of Debussy or other composers of that period, but tried to write music which was atmospheric and would have sounded somewhat avant-

garde at that time. The film was not produced and it would obviously cost millions of dollars but Pinter's script has been published and, when the American violinist Eudice Shapiro asked Humphrey to write something for her, he converted some of the Vinteuil music into Three Romantic Pieces for violin and piano but he thought the septet music would sound better with the ensemble mentioned by Proust.

Later that year, while visiting an exhibition of Edward Middleditch's work at the Serpentine Art Gallery, Humphrey ran into Julian Bream whom he had not seen for some time. He asked him to write a piece for solo guitar. He had quite a collection of British works written for him, including Britten, Fricker, Malcolm Arnold and Thomas Eastwood which he edited for a series published by Faber's. Searle did not want to write something in the conventional Spanish style, but stuck to his own method of writing, not strictly twelve-tone, but atonal and chromatic. Bream found it rather difficult at first and the composer had to make a few changes for technical reasons, but there was a good session on it at his handsome Georgian mansion in Wiltshire, and eventually it emerged as a suite of five short pieces played without a break. Humphrey gave it the simple title of Five. Julian has played it in recitals at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and elsewhere, as well as on the BBC.

For Christmas 1973, Humphrey went to stay with his brother John, his wife Jenifer and their 11-year-old son Howard at their Oxfordshire house between Witney and Charlbury. His mother was due to come over from Oxford on Christmas Day but, on Christmas Eve, John received a message from the Matron of the home in which she resided that she had died of a heart attack in the lift which was taking her back to her room after supper. This naturally cast a blight over Christmas, especially for Howard, whose Christmas tree was loaded with presents. But in some ways it was a good ending for mother who was 84. Although perfectly alert mentally and enjoying life, she was finding it increasingly difficult to walk and her life ended on an upbeat, looking forward to our first family Christmas party for years.

In the spring of 1974, the Cork Choral Festival celebrated its 21st birthday and invited all the composers who had been commissioned to write works for it in previous years to attend the celebrations. Humphrey and Fiona went over with their friend Beti Marshall who had recently divorced her husband and needed a break. They hired a car in Dublin and had a hilarious drive when a drunken man stepped in front of the car coming from one pub to another and, on another occasion, a horse leapt over a hedge missing the travellers by inches. In Cork, they were invited to a ceremony at which honorary doctorates of music were presented by President de Valera, then in his nineties, to a number of elderly composers, including William Walton who had written a setting of the Canticum del Sol of St. Francis of Assisi for the Festival. The ceremony was a moving one in view of the age of the participants, and it was followed by a cheerful party, as indeed were all the evening concerts which usually seemed to end up in the Lord Mayor's Parlour where WW (William Walton) and everyone were generously entertained. The composers who were not having works performed had no official duties and just came for the ride, making a pleasant break. They spent one day right out in the sticks at Ballydehob, not far from the west coast, visiting Helen Letts' sister-in-law who kept two donkeys in her field just for the pleasure of their company. Finding the way back to Cork was a trifle difficult, as very few of the people from whom the way was asked understood anything but Gaelic, which shows that the efforts of the Irish Government to promote the language have not been in vain.

Back in Dublin, there was an extraordinary encounter with Reggie Smith and some of his Irish friends who kept walking in and out of the Bailey bar in a group, saying "Hullo now", "Good-bye now", "Hullo now" and so on ad infinitum. The Searles journey back to England was rather fraught. As Beti Marshall had to work on the Monday they had to travel on the Sunday reaching Liverpool Lime Street Station at an unearthly hour and found nothing open while waiting for the train.... not even a cup of coffee was available. When the train eventually arrived it took seven hours to get to London instead of the usual two and a half, travelling via all sorts of unlikely places such as Birmingham.

The Cheltenham Festival that year included an evening with the King's Singers devoted to the Seven Deadly Sins, and seven composers were asked to contribute a piece on each of the sins. Humphrey was allotted Pride, not that Humphrey was a particularly proud person. P. J. Kavanagh, the director of the Cheltenham Poetry Festival, found an amusing poem for Searle to set, Rhyme Rude to my Pride, by James Michie. Humphrey did not attempt to exploit the extreme vocal pyrotechnics of which the King's Singers are capable, but wrote a fairly straightforward setting which went down quite well. Elisabeth Lutyens wrote an ingenious setting of Sloth, for which she provided her own poem, and most of the other pieces were short and to the point, except for one overlong semi-dramatic cantata.

In the summer of 1974, they visited Humphrey's sister-in-law's sister Antonia Poole at her cottage in the Dordogne, to which she had retired after holding down a post at UNESCO in Paris for some years. They drove via Southampton and Le Havre, and were able to reach Mont St Michel at 10 a. m and so had time to appreciate its beauty, arriving before the main rush of tourists. The Dordogne Humphrey found disappointing after Provence, despite some nice country scenery and some pleasant hilltop villages.. The weather was wet and Bergerac seemed a boring place, unworthy of its famous fictional son Cyrano. On the way to the south. they spent the night at Albi which they much preferred, both architecturally and for its splendid Toulouse-Lautrec museum. Searle had not realised that he was such a good landscape painter in his early days. As Fiona had wanted to see the white horses of the Camargues they took that route and went on to Aries, where they were rewarded by a view of the amphitheatre the following morning.

By the simple expedient of buying a 2½d ticket in a raffle organised by the Labour Party, Fiona had won £500 on a horse called Dahlia, which, ridden by Lester Piggott, won the King George and Queen Elizabeth Stakes in July. This win enabled her to invite her sister Sheila to escape from her family problems in South Africa and stay with her for a few weeks at Ordnance Hill in October. Although Sheila found the cold climate of London rather trying after the heat of Durban, she was glad to be with Fiona again and they were able to give her raspberries for breakfast, her favourite fruit, unobtainable in South Africa.

Humphrey wrote two more pieces that year of 1974. His friend, the actor Hugh Burden, persuaded him to set John Donne's Nocturnall upon St. Lucie's Day being the "Shortest Day" a poem of almost unrelieved gloom but which Searle found interesting and dramatic. Gerald English had asked him to write a long song for him, and Searle was glad to have this opportunity of fulfilling this request. Then, in the autumn, Basil Ashmore, who had been concerned with theatrical ventures of various kinds for many years, decided to put on a festival at Chalfont St. Giles in honour of the tercentenary of Milton, which he felt had been neglected. He asked Humphrey to write a work for cello and piano, to be played by the redoubtable brothers Rohan and Druvi de Saram. The composer decided on two contrasting pieces, Il Penseroso e L'Allegro, thus reversing Milton's order. The concert was not very well organised. In spite of the presence of several well-known actors and actresses who read Milton's poems, and in spite of the admirable playing of the de Saram brothers, the evening lacked coherence and went on too long which was a pity, as it was a good idea.

In 1975, Mr and Mrs Searle paid their last visit to Provence before their American trip. They spent one night at Salon and it was not till they got to Cannes, where the Buckels had found a small flat for them, that Humphrey discovered his briefcase was missing from the car, although everything else, including some bottles of spirits and cartons of cigarettes, were intact. The briefcase was only important because it contained the MS of a work which he was writing for the U. S. Bicentennial and he did not want to have to start it all over again. He wrote to the police in Salon and shortly afterwards received a letter notifying him that the briefcase had been found. He went to Salon to retrieve it and the contents were intact. Apparently the thief, who had forced open a window of the car during the night, was fed up when he discovered that the case contained no money or valuables and had thrown it over a hedge. A pleasant time was spent in Cannes, seeing the Buckels and their friends, but it is

not an exciting city, especially at night, when everything closes at 8pm except the tourist hotels and restaurants along the Croisette.

They returned to London in time for Humphrey's 60th birthday on 26 August. The BBC celebrated this by playing *Labyrinth* at the Proms. The LSO gave an excellent performance under the young German conductor Bernhard Klee. Michael Ayrton, had been a good friend for more than thirty years and Humphrey had a great admiration for his genius as painter, sculptor, writer and speaker. At the time of his death, Ayrton was working on a series of television scripts called *The Question of Mirrors* for the BBC which was an extraordinarily broad-based project and he had asked Humphrey to look after the musical side of it. After his death, a single programme was broadcast which contained extracts from his scripts and appreciations of Michael by his friends including James Cameron, Frederic Raphael and Searle. People have often criticised Michael for spreading his genius in too many directions. Everything he did was well done and posterity will have a higher opinion of him than was fashionable in earlier times. He was one of the most astonishingly gifted people that Searle ever met.

1975 was the 150th anniversary of British Rail and, shortly after the end of the Prom season, they hired the Albert Hall for a concert of railway music. This included the first British performance of Berlioz' *Chant des Chemins de Fer*, written in 1846 for the opening of the Paris-Lille railway. Although not one of his greatest masterpieces as it was written in three days!, it is certainly worth performing. Humphrey made a new English translation of the words, as the one in the printed score bears little relationship to Jules Janin's text. Richard Lewis was the excellent soloist, with the John Alldis and London Philharmonic Choirs and the RPO under Charles Groves. Bernard Kaukas, the chief architect of British Rail, had had the idea for the concert and he appointed a small committee of fellow members of the Savage Club to draw up the programme. This included Honegger's *Pacific 231*, some railway films, the Ted Heath Band, Vivian Ellis' *Coronation Scot* and a Grand Finale concocted by Alan Civil on the theme of *Oh! Mr. Porter* and *The Runaway Train*. Searle's contribution was a setting of another T. S. Eliot poem, *Skimblehanks the Railway cat*, for baritone (John Gibbs), chorus and orchestra. The performers also included Kenneth More as compare and the trumpeters of the Royal Military School of Music. But British Rail had no idea of how to organise a concert. There was practically no publicity for it and the programme was badly laid out and, as a result, the hall was by no means full. One might have thought that railway buffs from all over the country would have wanted to attend.

Humphrey had joined the Savage Club in 1972 but was not much of a clubman, but it is very different from the type of club in which elderly gentlemen snooze for hours in leather armchairs behind copies of *The Times*. Savage members are friendly and talk to one another whether they know each other or not. Most of them are artists or belong to other entertainment professions, but "shop" and briefcases were discouraged. Throughout the winter, there are fortnightly evening entertainments in which artists of the calibre of Alan Civil or John Wilbraham give their services for nothing. Searle was pleased to sit on the Entertainments Sub-Committee for some years and to help to organise some of these evenings. As there are numerous Ladies Nights, he did not have to leave Fiona at home whenever he went to the club.

Chapter sixteen

1976 was the U. S. Bicentennial year and, in 1975, Humphrey had a letter from his old friend Newell Jenkins saying that they were scratching their heads down at Clarion as to how to celebrate this without including too much Billings. Billings was an American composer of the late 18th century, and was, no doubt, represented in many American concerts in the Bicentennial year. Clarion is the music society which Newell ran in New York which gives concerts of chamber orchestral music,

mainly by lesser known 17th or 18th century composers, such as Schmelzer, Steffani and Joseph Martin Kraus, but also includes a certain number of contemporary works.

Clarion decided to commission works from several American and European composers for this season, and Newell's friend, Jack Hurley, suggested that Searle might set *Contemplations* by Mistress Anne Bradstreet who was born in Northampton in 1612 but went to America in 1630 and became the wife of the Governor of Massachusetts. Apart from bearing eight children, she wrote a great many poems and, without her knowledge, her brother-in-law published a volume of these under the title *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung up in America*. Humphrey liked *Contemplations* very much. It is mainly a pastoral poem in the 17th century tradition concerned with the immanence of God in nature, although there is a more dramatic central section which tells the story of Cain and Abel. Newell had engaged the excellent singer Jan DeGaetani as the soloist, and he had at his disposal a Mozart-sized orchestra including a harpsichord, which was ideal for the composers purpose. Humphrey did not set the whole poem, which would have been far too long for the 15-20 minute piece which Newell had asked for, but he was able to preserve its general shape sufficiently to give a good comprehensive idea of it.

The first performance took place on 21 April 1976, Queen Elizabeth's 50th birthday, in the Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, New York and went very well, and the Press notices were favourable.

In order to finance the trip, Searle had arranged to give a number of lectures at American universities, beginning with Columbia, New York. It was extremely hot there, about 90F but, when he reached his next port of call, Bowling Green, Ohio, it was snowing... such are the vagaries of the American climate! In Bowling Green, Humphrey gave a lecture-recital on Liszt with the American pianist Jerome Rose who has specialised in Liszt and made a number of records of his music. Then Searle stayed for two days at Dayton, Ohio with Ann and David Nicholson. David was Fiona's first cousin and a high-level doctor who was concerned with the health problems of the astronauts at Houston, Texas. Then they went on to Athens, Ohio, where another old friend, Neville Rogers, probably then the greatest living expert on Shelley, was Professor of English. He had arranged for Humphrey to lecture on 12-tone music. His final stop was at Iowa City, where he was entertained by Jerome's colleague James Avery. He showed him a most interesting film, complete with laser beams, which the students of Iowa University had made of Scriabin's *Prometheus*, a work in which the composer himself had prescribed various colour effects in the score. James himself played the difficult solo piano part.

After returning to England, Humphrey Searle was invited to give an introductory talk in connection with a revival of *The Photo of the Colonel* in Oldenburg. Their musical director, the Austrian conductor Peter Schrottner, had been assistant conductor in Frankfurt at the time of the stage premiere of the opera in 1963 and he was determined to put it on in Oldenburg before departing to take up a similar position in his native Graz. The opera was performed straight through without an interval, which is feasible, if rather exhausting. Musically, the performance was excellent. The Berenger, Ernst-Dieter Suttheimer, sang his part without the cuts which had been made to it in Frankfurt, and showed great stamina as he is on stage practically throughout the opera. The other singers were very good and the orchestra played admirably under Peter Schrottner. The only quarrel was with the production. The whole point of the opening act of Ionesco's play is that the existence of a ruthless killer at large in the Radiant City is only very slowly revealed by the Architect to Berenger, culminating in the murder of the Architect's blonde secretary at the end of the act. In Oldenburg, the decor consisted of rows of coffins, the characters appeared in mourning and the stage was littered with torn-up pieces of newspaper, which must have given the assistant manager a headache to sweep up. So the game was given away from the start. Unfortunately, Ionesco never attended rehearsals or performances of his plays and, at this stage, Searle was invited to come to Oldenburg only three days before the first performance on 30 May, 1976 and so it was too late to alter the general shape of the

production. However, he made some suggestions about individual details of the action which the producer accepted.

In August, the Searles had two calamities. One morning, the ceiling of their sitting-room suddenly collapsed. It had cracked owing to the drought, a rare occurrence in England. Humphrey was in the studio downstairs, and fortunately Fiona had gone into the kitchen to make some coffee otherwise she would have suffered the full weight of an old-fashioned ceiling made of lumps of plaster twelve inches thick. Although they had an insurance policy for both the structure and the contents of the house, the insurance company refused to pay more than a token sum, maintaining that drought was an act of God and was not supposed to occur in England.

Then on the next day, they heard of the sudden death of an old friend Helen Letts, whom they had met regularly at least once a week at her house or their own house and whose children had been almost a second family to the Searles. She had gone into hospital for a routine check-up and suddenly had a heart attack. At least, she did not have a long illness. She was missed very much. Shortly after this, Mr and Mrs Searle spent a few days in St. Malo, staying in the old part of this pretty walled town, before Humphrey had to leave again for America.

In February, he had been approached by the Music Faculty of USC, the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, to become guest professor for the academic year 1976-7. His old friend Ellis Kohs was a member of the Faculty and was behind this invitation. At any rate, Humphrey was glad to return to California, and willingly accepted the invitation. His Uncle Willie died in September at the age of 88 and, unfortunately, his funeral was on the day that Searle had arranged to fly to Los Angeles. As the flight could not be changed, he was prevented from paying his last respects to someone whom he had always liked very much.

On his second day in Los Angeles, Humphrey went to an afternoon party at the house of Dr. Howard Rarig, the Chairman of the Music Faculty, where he was able to meet many of his future colleagues, including his immediate boss, Robert Linn, the head of the Theory and Composition Department. He and his wife Virginia were very charming people, and they got on well. In order to avoid driving long distances along the crowded L. A. freeways, Searle had asked the University if they could find him an apartment within walking distance of the campus and they gave him one in a block mostly occupied by graduate students, which was noisy but generally quite pleasant. Fiona joined her husband a couple of weeks later after he had had time to settle in.

His duties at the University were not too arduous giving composition lessons to advanced students and also an evening course on avant-garde methods. He found that the students' knowledge had increased considerably since he was at Stanford as they were now fully conversant with the music of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern, and even more so with Berio, Boulez and Stockhausen, so that Humphrey found himself trying to keep ahead of them. But they were all very pleasant and friendly, and worked well together. In the second semester, after Christmas, Searle also gave a course on Liszt, which seemed to be appreciated. Fortunately, he had plenty of time for his own composition, and the University put a room with a piano at his disposal for most of the time. At weekends, especially when they included a public holiday, the Searles often flew up to San Francisco and stayed with their old friend Dorothy Schilder. At that time, she had a beautiful apartment on Clay Street, with a marvellous view over most of the city. As she had a job in a lawyer's office and was out most of the day, Humphrey was able to use her excellent piano.

The USC campus was very compact since one can walk its whole length or breadth in ten minutes, and the area between the campus and their apartment was mostly occupied by student hostels. But to the north and east was a rather slummy part of the city, mostly occupied by negroes and Mexicans and, although it was normally safe enough to walk to the campus in daylight, at night it could be dangerous. Muggings often occurred, even on the campus itself, and the University authorities

organised a small open gaily-lighted bus to take the students to their quarters in the evenings. This was driven by an agreeable black man called Horace, and the route was usually known as the Rape Escape. Humphrey often availed himself of this taxi service after evening classes or concerts on the campus. There was otherwise very little to do in the evenings, unless they were entertaining friends or colleagues or being entertained in their houses. The television programmes were appalling. The highest intellectual level was reached by "Bewitched" and "I Love Lucy" and, although there was a re-run of the Groucho Marx quiz show, it did not come on until midnight. With little else to do the Searles began to write their memoirs.

They had been told that it was impossible to live in Los Angeles without a car, and, in fact, most of Humphrey's colleagues at USC lived in more agreeable parts like Beverly Hills or Hollywood and drove long distances to work each day. Searle was not keen on driving by this time and Fiona's wallet with her driving-licence was stolen in San Francisco and it took months to replace it from the Vehicle Licensing Office in Swansea and, by the time the new one arrived, the stay at USC was coming to an end. So they managed without a car and there was a bus service which was infrequent and slow, and it took ages to get down town, which was not much of a shopping centre. When Gertrude Stein returned to New York after a visit to Los Angeles she was asked "How is it out there?", to which she is said to have replied "There isn't a 'there' there". Still, the Searles managed to visit friends as far afield as Pasadena, a very agreeable place, and Inglewood in the another direction.

The USC had asked Humphrey's to send them some of his scores in case they were able to arrange performances of them during the winter. In this way, several of his pieces were heard at Faculty Composers' concerts. *Les Fleurs du Mal* was performed by a good young professional tenor, with a student horn player and Humphrey at the piano. The *Cello Fantasy* was excellently played by two students and the head of the guitar department played the piece Searle had written for Julian Bream, and a student conductor and orchestra gave an admirable performance of the *Zodiac Variations*. In addition, a student ensemble conducted by Robert Wojciak performed the *Sinfonietta* in one of the famous Monday Evening Concerts in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Humphrey had hoped that *Kubla Khan* might also be performed at USC, but their chorus was otherwise engaged and their Music School possessed no organ which has a small but important part in it.

Here an old friend of Searles came to the rescue. Peter Racine Fricker had been a member of the Music Faculty of the University of California at Santa Barbara, 100 miles north of L. A., since 1964, when they had both gone to America for the first time, and he visited the Searles several times in L. A. He undertook to show the score to the choral and orchestral conductors in Santa Barbara and they agreed to do the work. The choral conductor was Michael Ingham, a very talented baritone singer who has performed a great many operatic roles as well as giving song recitals with his wife, Carolyn Horne, who is an excellent pianist. But there was a last minute crisis since the male chorus, which was due to sing Brahms' *Rinaldo* in the same concert, was unable to tackle Humphrey's work as well, so he had to rearrange the choral part for women's' voices only, which of course alters the quality of sound, though not disastrously. At least the tenor solo part was sung by a member of the Santa Barbara faculty. Michael Ingham secured a very good performance from both chorus and orchestra, and the work was well received. Searle was delighted to hear it at last. It is a splendid piece.

Peter Fricker also asked Humphrey to give a talk about his own music in Santa Barbara, in the course of which he told the story of having been bowled over by *Wozzeck* when he was 19 in 1934. Humphrey was astonished when Peter told him that he had had the same experience on hearing this performance. and he was only 14 at the time! It certainly changed both their lives from the musical standpoint. Fricker wrote to Sir Adrian Boult, who had conducted *Wozzeck* but who had more or less retired from conducting by this time, telling him of our experiences, and Searle later wrote to him on the same subject and both of them received charming letters back, giving some details of the performance and the various difficulties which attended it since nothing so complicated had ever been attempted in England before and how the difficulties were overcome.

Humphrey gave various lectures at other universities, including Stanford, where he was glad to see many old friends after twelve years absence, and at Berkeley, where he talked to many of the students at the house of his old friend Andrew Imbrie. His opera, *Angle of Repose*, commissioned for the U. S. Bicentennial, was given in San Francisco around this time. It is an interesting synthesis of stories of California in the 19th century and the present day. The music, although ingenious, is perhaps a bit too complex to be really effective as theatre.

Another university where Searle gave a lecture was Northridge near Los Angeles and here he met the colourful Aurelio de la Vega and his charming wife Santa. Aurelio, a Cuban by birth, had left his native country on the advent of Castro and had settled in California as a young and unknown composer. He had attempted to have lessons with Schoenberg, who apparently treated him very badly, demanding large sums of money which Aurelio did not have in spite of his aristocratic background, and eventually throwing him out of his house. Latterly, Aurelio went in very much for electronics and other avant-garde methods of composition.

The Arnold Schoenberg Institute at USC was opened in February 1977 and presided over by Leonard Stein, who had been assistant to Schoenberg in Los Angeles and edited many of his theoretical writings after his death. There were two official openings. In the first one, Humphrey was asked to give a talk on Schoenberg but as he had never met him, he was somewhat embarrassed. The music due to be played that afternoon included his second string quartet which is intimately connected with the story of his first wife Mathilde temporarily leaving him for the painter Gerstl, and the latter's suicide when Mathilde returned to her husband. Searle was somewhat worried about telling this story in public, as Schoenberg's three children by his second wife, his two sons Ronald and Lawrence and his daughter Nuria, were sitting in the audience but, as it had already been made public in H. H. Stuckenschmidt's definitive biography of Schoenberg which, incidentally, Humphrey had translated, and had taken place many years before these children were born, it probably caused no offence. The Archivist of the Schoenberg Institute, Clara Steuermann, widow of the pianist Eduard Steuermann, who had done so much to promote Schoenberg's compositions, was an extremely charming and intelligent person, and with Mr and Mrs Searle became good friends. At the second opening of the Schoenberg Institute, Boulez gave a good speech, in which he hoped that the Institute would become a breeding-ground for new ideas for the future, as Schoenberg would have wanted, rather than a museum of the past. Various other personalities connected with Schoenberg also appeared on this occasion, including Stuckenschmidt and Rudolf Kolisch, the violinist whose quartet had given many performances of Schoenberg's works in his lifetime. He was also the brother of Schoenberg's second wife. A small party was given for him afterwards at the Searles apartment, but he was over 80 and appeared tired and frail.

At USC, the Theory and Composition Faculty normally lunched together every Friday in the University Restaurant. Wives and husbands of the Faculty were welcome, and it was usually a cheerful party, especially if celebrating the birthday of someone, in which case toasts would be drunk and an enormous birthday cake produced. Often on Friday mornings, there were illustrated lectures by outside speakers, composers, performers or other people associated with music, about their life and work. These speakers included the American composer Gail Kubik, Oliver Daniel, the head of the American copyright organisation BMI, the Australian horn player Barry Tuckwell and the British conductor Neville Marriner, who, at that time, was in charge of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra for part of the year. Humphrey was asked to give a lecture in this series in March and, as an illustration of his work, he played the New York tape of *Contemplations*. At the lunch afterwards, there seemed to be a lot of mysterious comings and goings which were not understood until champagne and a vast cake were produced in Searles honour. As his birthday was in August, by which time he would have left L. A., his colleagues decided to celebrate it on the occasion of his lecture, -a very kind thought which he appreciated.

The Professor Emeritus of the Faculty was Halsey Stevens, a composer somewhat in the neo-classical style and a man of great culture. He is the author of the standard book in English on Bartok and actually learned Hungarian in order to be able to read Bartok's letters in the original, as the translations provided for him had turned out to be inaccurate. The Searles spent several very pleasant evenings with him and his wife Harriett, a skilled potter, at their house in Inglewood, and they often met them since then in England where Halsey and Harriett spent one summer.

Humphrey was also asked to give lectures at other colleges not too far from USC, including Irvine where Newell Jenkins was holding a summer course. At his apartment, Mr and Mrs Searle met a remarkable man of Red Indian origin who was the Dean of the Faculty. He had an extraordinarily impressive appearance and manner, and made them reflect on the sorry way in which many Americans treated the Red Indians. They also visited Humphrey's British colleague Bernard Rands, who was the conductor of a contemporary music group at the University of California, San Diego. They stayed at the pleasant small town of La Jolla, where Fiona's mother Mollie had lived more than fifty years before, hoping to get into films in Hollywood. She was stopped from going there by her father who feared that she might be corrupted by the Tinsel City. They also visited San Diego, an attractive city which Humphrey wanted to see again, and spent a day at the fascinating Sea World nearby, with its many aquariums and performing dolphins.

At Christmas, the travellers visited Mexico City again as Fiona's cousin Irene Nicholson had died and they were without many contacts. However, one of Humphrey's colleagues at USC suggested that he should look up the American composer Conlan Nancarrow who had lived in Mexico for many years. Apparently, he was more or less exiled from the USA as he had supported the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War and was therefore regarded as a Commie by American standards. He was probably nothing of the sort. He turned out to be an agreeable, if slightly quirky, figure who looks something like the pictures of Rip van Winkle. He and his wife, a young Japanese archaeologist, entertained their guests generously. Later, Humphrey and Fiona spent two days exploring the marvellous Anthropological Museum. The second visit was on a Sunday, when the five million people in Mexico City all seemed to be on the streets. The visitors despaired of ever getting back to their hotel either by bus or by taxi, when a car came along driven by the one person they knew in the city, Conlon Nancarrow. It seemed a strange coincidence. Later at USC, Searle heard some tapes of the remarkable pieces he had written for the unfashionable medium of the player-piano. The increases in speed which it is able to produce achieve some very interesting results.

Fiona had been given the name of Kenneth Bannister who was in charge of a Spiritualist sanctuary in a suburb of the city and managed to make contact with his wife who invited her to lunch on New Year's Day. When they arrived at their house, they were astonished to see a record of Rosemary Brown's music, with a note on the sleeve by Searle about a piano piece called Grubelei which she said had been dictated to her by Liszt from the grave. Neither Mrs. Bannister nor any of her relations in the house could explain how the record came to be there. Humphrey had been sent Grubelei by the BBC a few years earlier in connection with a radio programme about Rosemary Brown and was asked what he thought about it. It is certainly in keeping with Liszt's experimental style, being mostly written in single notes in each hand and is highly chromatic, and one hand is written in 5/4 time against 3/2 in the other. The latter is not a thing that Liszt ever did, but it is the sort of thing he might have done as Humphrey said in his broadcast, which comment was reproduced on this record sleeve without his knowledge! Since then the Searles got to know Rosemary well and believed her to be perfectly genuine. Even if the pieces dictated to her by dead composers are not masterpieces, although some of them are very pleasing works, she has had no technical training in composition and could not possibly produce pastiches like, say, those by Joseph Cooper in his TV programme Face the Music. or Ravel's "A la maniere de...."

In May, Humphrey was asked to go on a five-day visit to Madison, Wisconsin. This trip was arranged by the pianist Gunnar Johansen who had set himself the formidable task of recording all Liszt's piano

works.. He had got the Music Faculty of Madison University to invite Searle to give several lectures, including one on Faust in music, for which he was provided by the University with a score of Spohr's Faust Overture, a surprisingly cheerful piece and another on Liszt's late works, which Johansen illustrated on the piano, sometimes with his own embellishments. Humphrey visited his studio, several miles outside Madison in pleasant, rather English-looking country where he was able to make his recordings without disturbance. Madison is an agreeable small town. At one end of the main street is a Capitol, based on the one in Washington but deliberately built a few inches lower, and at the other the University campus. There is a lake just outside the city and some good restaurants, and so his short stay there was very pleasant.

During the first part of his period at USC, Searle had written a Fantasia on British Airs at the request of a fellow-member of the Savage Club, Major Gerry Horobin, who was then the overall director of the five bands of the Brigade of Guards: the Grenadiers, Coldstreams, Scottish, Irish and Welsh. It was to be performed in the Albert Hall in June 1977 at a concert in honour of the Queen's Silver Jubilee, and Gerry suggested that each band should play their own national airs in turn. Humphrey thought that, after a bit, each band would get fed up with waiting for their turn and all five would play their own tunes simultaneously, causing an indescribable melee which could only be resolved by a combined performance of Rule Britannia in Arne's original version. Humphrey wrote the piece on these lines and sent off a copy to Gerry in January 1977 and heard nothing for some months, until he received a letter from the Chairman of the Committee which was organising the concert, saying that Gerry had had a nervous breakdown and had left the Army. As a result, the performance was cancelled and Humphrey was not even offered a fee. Hearing of this, the conductor of the wind symphony orchestra at USC offered to give the world premiere of the piece as a tribute to the Queen, a very generous gesture, and had some students copied the parts. Unfortunately, as there were so many mistakes in the copies, and as there was no time to correct them before the concert, the performance had to be abandoned. When Searle got back to England, he corrected the parts himself and the first performance was eventually given by his friend Harry Legge and his Youth Wind Symphony Orchestra. It is only an occasional piece, but Humphrey found it quite amusing to write, although the numerous transposing instruments in this type of orchestra make it complicated to score.

The other work which he began in Los Angeles was a kind of cantata based on Thomas Mann's Dr. Faustus, commissioned by the BBC. A good deal of it was written during their various stays with Dorothy Schilder in San Francisco. Here they again saw the viola player Rolf Persinger and his wife Arden, whom they had met at Aspen ten years before who made them welcome at their charming house on the San Francisco Bay at Tiburon. Fiona's birthday was on June 1st and, as Peter Fricker was in San Francisco for a few days, the three of them went on an agreeable steamer trip round the Bay. After this, they repaired to a bar on Polk Street, an area well known as a haunt of male homosexuals or gays, as they are now unfortunately called, but close to Dorothy's apartment. Here Fiona had an unexpected experience in the ladies' Powder Room. Two girls, one pretty, the other butch and mannish, tried to prevent her from leaving the room, promising her all sorts of delights if she would spend an evening with them. Fiona had to knee one of them in the groin in order to escape. When she told Peter and her husband about her ordeal they both roared with laughter, much to her fury!

They were sorry to say goodbye to Dorothy when they left, and, in fact, they never saw her again. Sadly, she died not long afterwards. Her sister Patsy Linn, and Alta Weinstock, were passing through London after a trip to the Middle East, (where they could not be contacted by telephone or telegram) and it was Humphrey's difficult task to break the news of Dorothy's death to their friends.

Chapter seventeen

Humphrey did not particularly want to write a Faust; there have already been admirable ones by Berlioz, Schumann, Liszt and Busoni, not to mention Spohr, Wagner Gounod, Henry Hugo Pierson and others. However when the BBC asked him to write music for a programme about Thomas Mann's Dr. Faustus, he could not resist the challenge, especially as Mann's Adrian Leverkühn is very different from the Faust of Goethe, Lenau or the medieval puppet play. He uses the supernatural powers given him by the Devil for the sake of developing himself as a composer rather than concentrate on wine, women or power. In fact, he has rather a miserable life, riddled with syphilis which he has deliberately contracted and which ends in an epileptic fit. Mann's wide knowledge of music enabled him to describe in detail many of the works composed by Leverkühn, and this was of enormous help to Searle, especially as he is supposed to be a 12-tone composer (a personification which annoyed Schoenberg very much, as he felt, quite unjustifiably, that he himself was being pilloried in Mann's character).

The BBC commissioned the poet and novelist Robert Nye to write the text of the programme which is not a dramatisation of the novel, since that would have been more or less impossible, but a discussion of the principal ideas in it, mainly in the form of a narration interspersed with quotations from Leverkühn's biographer in the novel., the egregious Serenus Zeitblom, from the Devil and from Leverkühn himself. Obviously if Humphrey had attempted to compose all the works attributed to Leverkühn in the book the programme would have gone on all night, so Nye made a selection of the most important and interesting ones, and in writing music for these Humphrey followed Mann's indications as far as possible. The work begins with a short poem which Nye had written as a prologue. Humphrey set this for baritone and orchestra, the singer being intended to personify Leverkühn as Faust. For this part he had an excellent artist, John Gibbs. The second piece is an impressionistic symphonic poem, Ocean Lights, which was intended to represent Leverkühn's earlier style, as were the two Blake songs, Silent Night and The Sick Rose, For the latter, and as Searle had to avoid comparison with the well-known setting of the same poem in Britten's Serenade for tenor, horn and strings, he had a soprano singer rather than a tenor and made the music as dramatic as possible.

Most of the later music, which was supposed to have been written after Leverkühn's pact with the Devil, is pervaded by the Esmeralda theme is based on the musical notes in German notation in the name Hetaera Esmeralda, the whore who gave Leverkühn syphilis. In English notation. this comes out as B-E-A-E-Eflat.

The first mature work of Leverkühn's represented in this programme was his setting of Klopstock's Spring Festival for baritone solo, strings and organ. Humphrey set the poem in German, but shortened it considerably, retaining the more dramatic passages. Nye's text allowed for only a short extract from Leverkühn's next orchestral work, Marvels of the Universe, but the Gesta Romanorum, which was written for the puppet theatre with a small band defined by Mann as consisting of violin, double bass, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone and percussion, gave Searle the opportunity of writing a longer piece. Robert Nye wrote a text based on The Birth of the Holy Pope Gregory which Mann specifically mentioned as being a favourite of Leverkühn's. This is for narrator and four singers, representing the Emperors Marcus and Constantine (baritone and tenor), Constantine's sister (soprano) and Amor (counter-tenor). In his description of the piece, Mann seems to have been thinking of works like Stravinsky's Histoire du Soldat and so Searle gave it a slightly neo-classical flavour.

The two most important pieces of music in the Faustus cantata are the Apocalypsis cum figuris and the Lamentation of Dr. Faustus. The former was inspired by Durer's enormous fresco of that crowded wall, swarming with bodies, where angels perform staccato on trumpets of destruction, Charon's barque unloads its freight, the dead rise, saints pray... the condemned man, clung round, carried and

drawn by grinning sons of the pit, makes a horrid descent, covering one eye with his hand and with the other staring transfixed with horror into bottomless perdition.

It begins with the words

The end is come, it watcheth for thee, behold it is come,
sung by the countertenor who, in Mann's words, is
the witness and narrator of the horrid happenings, whose chilly crow, objective, reporter-like,
stands in terrifying contrast to the content of his
catastrophic announcements.

His words are repeated by a double chorus singing antiphonally. Then the men of the chorus sing

For my soul is full of troubles and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

The counter-tenor's description of the loosing of the four avenging angels from the Book of Revelation, is followed by an orchestral description of the destruction of a third of mankind; here Mann prescribes glissandi on timpani and trombones, and the composer was able to base these on the Esmeralda theme. A mocking, bleating bassoon in its highest register accompanies the counter-tenor's description of the birds of the air who feed on the flesh of mankind. Then the chorus, beginning with whispers, and accompanied only by percussion, gradually rises to a climax and leads to the harsh choral fugue on the words of Jeremiah, We have transgressed and have rebelled. Mann describes this section as giving the impression of a fugue, yet the theme is not faithfully repeated. Humphrey tried to achieve this by basing each of the four parts on a different form of the basic tone-row - original, inversion, retrograde and retrograde inversion, although the rhythm remains constant, punctuated by fortissimo chords for the full orchestra. This section ends with a picture of the condemned man looking down into the abyss.

The second part of the Apocalypse begins more light-heartedly. The part of the whore of Babylon is described by Mann as a most graceful coloratura of great virtuosity. Here Searle used Spanish rhythms and took the soprano part up to a G in alt. Next come parodies of the different musical styles in which the insipid wantonness of hell indulges in French impressionism, bourgeois drawing-room music, Tchaikovsky, Music-hall and jazz. These offered plenty of opportunities for poking fun at different styles and Robert Nye produced suitably nonsensical texts for the devils to sing. Then came the chorus of hellish laughter, beginning quietly and rising to a tornado of sound, followed by the children's chorus, icily clear, glassily transparent and based entirely on the notes of the devils' laughing chorus and for this Nye again wrote an excellent text. The piece ends with the abyss music for full orchestra and organ.

In The Lamentation of Dr. Faustus, Mann describes Leverkühn as intending to unmake Beethoven's Choral Symphony. It is in three parts; Faust's lamentation, for which Robert suggested that Searle should set the final speech from Marlowe's Dr. Faustus. Ah Faustus, Now hast thou but one bare hour to live is a choral scherzo showing the carrying off of Faust to hell as a dance-furioso; for this Robert wrote a dance poem in the form of a jig, and in fact he called the whole programme The Devil's Jig. Then, after the entry of the chorus a cappella and fortissimo with Marlowe's words, Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight, comes a purely orchestral Adagio, The extreme lament, ending with all the instruments retiring one by one until finally we are left with a single note, a high G on the cello. Searle suddenly realised that the three sections of this piece corresponded in some ways to the first three movements of the Choral Symphony, so he prefaced each of the first two sections with quotations from the first two movements of the symphony, but substituting the Esmeralda phrase for Beethoven's themes. This may not be what Thomas Mann had in mind but it seemed to work quite well.

Searle finished the music in November 1977, but it was some time before the BBC was able to arrange for it to be recorded. The reason was that both the Spring Festival and the last two numbers need an organ, and the only useful one which the BBC possesses is in their big Maida Vale studio which is more or less permanently occupied by the BBC Symphony Orchestra. But it was able to be used for two days after the end of the Promenade season in 1979 and there were four good sessions with the excellent Ambrosian Chorus, who read off their parts at sight without the slightest difficulty, the New Symphony Orchestra, the Sinfonia of London, with Wendy Eathorne, Paul Esswood, Brian Burrows and John Gibbs as solo singers. Fiona was the narrator in *Gesta Romanorum*. The BBC liked the programme when it was broadcast in the following March and they asked the composer for suggestions for future programmes.

While the Searles were in America, Humphrey's youngest brother John stayed at Ordnance Hill during the week, when he was lecturing at the Ealing Polytechnic. Although his health had not been too good, Humphrey was startled by a telephone call from his wife Jenifer in the early morning of 5 February 1978 saying that he had died of a heart attack during the night. Mr and Mrs Searle immediately drove to Ramsden and tried to comfort Jenifer and her son Howard who had celebrated his 16th birthday only three days before. Humphrey made the arrangements for the funeral, in Ramsden church, and played the organ at it. He was closer to him than to any other member of his family, and felt his loss, at the age of only 56, all the more as both the Searles parents were dead and the other brother Michael was in Australia.

In March 1978, Humphrey and Fiona went to Cyprus for the first time since 1970. Since the Turkish invasion of 1974, it was no longer possible to go to Kyrenia except through Turkey, and Humphrey gathered that it was now rather a sad place. All their Greek friends had escaped to the southern part of the island. They went to Limassol, where they were lent a very nice flat overlooking the harbour by our friends Beti and Douglas Naylor. They were consultants for the Shell Oil Company, and had rented the flat in order to entertain Middle Eastern sheiks, but were willing to let their friends occupy it when they were not using it. They were able to meet old friends John and Vivian Guthrie in Nicosia (as British Commonwealth subjects they were allowed to come from Kyrenia into the Greek zone) and also Charles Papadopoulos of the CBC. They visited Cyprus several times since then and have made many friends, including the writers George and Caroline Lassalle. Caroline writes chilling and successful novels under the pseudonym of Emma Cave.

The Searles had scarcely returned to London in April when Humphrey received a telephone call asking if he would like to write music for a television production of the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus. Naturally he agreed and was put in touch with the director, Bill Hays, and the producer, Richard Brooke. A new translation had been commissioned from Frederic Raphael, author of many television plays, including "The Glittering Prizes" series, and the scholar Kenneth McLeish. They had got rid of the long choral odes which one finds in the translations by Gilbert Murray, and had split up each chorus into single lines for three individual speakers, often echoed by a singing chorus of nine. They put the three plays into modern English which makes them come alive as drama.

Searle discovered later that the project had been suggested to the BBC some years before by Michael Ayrton and he had proposed Frederic Raphael as translator and myself as composer while he himself would have designed the decor and costumes. It was a great pity that he did not live to design them.

The production had a good cast, especially on the distaff side, with Diana Rigg as Clytemnestra, Claire Bloom as Athena, Maureen O'Brien as Electra, Dame Flora Robson in the small part of the nurse Kilissa and Billie Whitelaw and Sian Phillips as the chorus leaders. The men included Denis Quilley as Agamemnon, Anton Lesser as Orestes and Alfred Burke as chorus leader. Bill Hays, who was an admirer of Bartok and Janacek, encouraged Humphrey to write "primitive" rather than conventional music. He also asked him to write a lot of it. Agamemnon begins with seven minutes of continuous music which is rare in a TV play. Humphrey was attacked by the critic of the Daily

Telegraph for "attempting to turn the Oresteia into an opera". He was able to point out that in the introduction to their translation, published under the title of *The Serpent Son*, Raphael and McLeish said, "Large portions of the play (perhaps as much as two thirds) were performed to music" (in classical terms) and that Bill was therefore justified in his demands. Searle had to write about two and a half hours of music in six months, which is certainly enough for an opera, and it may turn it into one if he have the time and opportunity. He enjoyed the project very much and was only sorry that it did not have more success with the public

Lawrence Leonard had asked Humphrey to write a new symphony for him, and he had made several unsuccessful attempts in the previous few years to write a war symphony. One evening, the Searles went on one of the Savage Club's annual boat trips up and down the Thames, with a highly distinguished band of Savages playing water music. There was a beautiful sunset, and the atmosphere was most stimulating. Suddenly Fiona suggested that Humphrey should write an orchestral piece based on the course of the Thames from source to sea, something like Smetana's *Vltava*, but on a larger scale. He thought this a good idea and immediately began work on it. Although it was interrupted by the *Oresteia*, it was finished in 1979. Basically it is a rondo called *Tamesis*, in which the down river passages alternate with thumbnail descriptions of the places the river passes through, e. g. Oxford (bells, dons' disputes), Reading (industry), Henley (regatta), Windsor and Eton (here the composer combined *Rule Britannia* with the Eton Boating Song), Twickenham (rugby), and various places in London such as Chelsea (jazz), the Palace of Westminster and the Tower of London. He was uncertain how to end the piece, whether to let it fade away like *Riverrun*, to fade away but to end with two fortissimo chords like *Vltava*, or to rise to a climax as the river enters the sea. He eventually decided on the last. So far the piece has only been performed by the excellent student orchestra of Trinity College, London.

Searle had two small commissions in 1979. His friend and colleague Julian Baker asked him to write some pieces for four horns for his ensemble at the RCM. These were first performed at a great jamboree of horn players which was held in the Guildhall School of Music at Easter 1980. 500 horn players from all over the country took part, and Alan Civil arranged Beethoven's *Egmont Overture* for them all to play, a truly splendid sound, especially as some of them had to play piccolo parts. His second commission was for two songs for the young baritone Francis Thomas to perform at a Wigmore Hall recital. Here Humphrey renewed his connection with Sacheverell Sitwell, who was in his 80s by this time and was the last surviving member of the famous trio of poets. Searle set his *On Listening to Music* under *Tropical Flowering Trees*, a long poem from his late collection *Tropicalia*, first published in 1972, and coupled this with Osbert Sitwell's *On the Coast of Coromandel*, which gave him some opportunities for parody. He was glad to have been able to set poems by all the three Sitwells.

By now he seemed to have become a Pillar of the Establishment, since he was asked in 1980 to write works for the centenaries of two highly respectable institutions, Winchester College, which was celebrating its sixth centenary, and the RCM, which would be 100 years old in 1983. For Winchester, he wrote a kind of Academic Festival Overture based on tunes associated with Winchester, beginning with the morning hymn *Jam lucis orto sidere* which used to be sung at the beginning of each term on the top of St. Catherine's Hill at some unearthly hour. The Master of Music, Angus Watson, gave Searle two further Winchester pieces, the anthem *Fac Regem Salvum*, and a secular round, *Let omnibus Wykehamicis in a Bumper now go round*, said to have been sung at the Annual Meeting in Town. Searle made this into a kind of polytonal fugue, as he was asked to write Searle rather than pastiche. The overture ends with variations on the school song, *Dulce Domum*, which incidentally is not a glorification of Winchester College but says how nice it is to go home for the holidays. Angus Watson gave Humphrey an 18th century setting of it by Peter Fussel for oboes, horns and strings, and he followed this with variations on the theme in Spanish and in jazz styles, with a final apotheosis.

For the RCM he decided to write a larger orchestral work, a sort of historical suite in three movements, 1883-1914, 1914-1945 and 1945-1983. It was entitled Three Ages and is immediate and hugely enjoyable.

On their last visit to Limassol in March 1981, when they stayed with the Lassalles, Searle wrote some Cyprus Dances, based on Cypriot folk themes, for the young organist Robert Crowley. In September 1981, during three weeks in which they were asked to cat-sit in a beautiful apartment in Cannes while the owner was in America, Humphrey began music for a BBC programme in conjunction with Frederick Bradnum about the First World War poet Isaac Rosenberg, who was killed in the trenches on All Fools' Day, 1918. He set three of his fine but underrated poems, including the tragic but magnificent Dead Man's Dump. He was also asked to write a Fantasia for two pianos for the gifted duo of Anthony Lindsay and Simon Young.

EPILOGUE

Humphrey have been lucky enough to earn an adequate living for the last twenty-five years but, in the words of Christopher Isherwood's Mr. Norris, "I see breakers ahead". Taxes, rent, rates and prices were going up alarmingly all the time while royalties are not. Commissions are a matter of luck, and all Searle could do is to hope for the best in the future. In this mood he was reminded of the words of Paul Brunton, to whose books Lesley introduced him a long time ago: "No matter how desperate things may seem with yourself or with the world, still you must hope and hold on, knowing that the wheel will turn. It must turn". He did not regard this as naive optimism. He cannot believe in a purely mechanical universe, from which even many scientists have drifted away, and, if there is a universal purpose in life, one must try to do one's best as part of that process. To sit back and wait for good things to drop into one's lap is not enough. He admitted that he has been lucky in having been asked to do many things which he wanted to do, but he has always tried to do the best he could within the framework that was given to him. Whether he has succeeded is for others to decide. He writes for them, not for himself. But he has been helped by two very happy marriages which gave him confidence and for which he was deeply grateful.

One cannot turn compositions on like a tap; one has to wait for ideas to come, which may take a long time. And where do these ideas come from? They are certainly not "invented" by him since things often turn up which he did not in the least expect; that presupposes some kind of outside source, the nature of which is unknown. Our critical faculty has to put these ideas into a coherent shape, to give them flesh and blood as it were. So our work stands or falls both by the quality of the ideas themselves and by the treatment of them.

Humphrey said, "I can only say that I have been fortunate enough to receive a large number of musical ideas over the years, and I hope that I have been able to do them justice. If I have failed, well, that's too bad! But I am hopeful that I may at least partially have succeeded, and that Edward Lear's "They" will be unable to "smash" me. "

CONCLUSION

Humphrey was a great composer but often maligned because he was modern. We live in a world were almost everything that is new is regularly condemned and, in the world, of music the narrow minded and bigoted view is that if music does not have tunes it is not music at all.

A pioneer was Humphrey with an incalculable knowledge of music of all types and he was also very well versed in literature. He had a remarkable capacity for friendship and, at times, an irritating attitude of modesty. He hated the war, as do all decent people, and for a while thereafter it had a grim affect upon him and some of his works have a grim or psychological theme.

He championed many composers to the detriment of his own promotion since he was not an arrogant man like Elgar or Britten. Searle is responsible almost exclusively for the universal interest in Liszt and Alkan. In fact, he once said that his favourite composers were Beethoven, Liszt and Schoenberg. He edited much of Liszt's music including the symphonic poems as published by Eulenberg.

There was music he did not like but seldom expressed this and he sometimes said that the BBC promote music of lesser quality than music rich in invention and originality. As with Robert Simpson he would challenge the BBC over music they refused to perform or broadcast but admired William Glock and his adventurous spirit as he was the best Controller of Radio 3. Not only did he perform the moderns but the contemporary tonal British composers such as Rubbra, Alwyn, Veale and many others despite false allegation to the contrary by Lewis Foreman and Paul Jackson.

Searle's biography appeared on Music Web International where the editor is or was Rob Barnett. Humphrey would have been annoyed at Barnett's ridicule of Liszt and at his failure to edit the biography which I have tried to in the proceeding pages.

Humphrey died of an intestinal problem in St Mary's Hospital Paddington 12 May 1982. He was 66.

His widow Fiona tried to promote his music but depended on people whom she knew to assist her which people were unequal to the task. More positive ideas were put to her which would have been fruitful but these were not taken up by her or her advisors.

Fiona died on 27 June 2011.

It is hoped that this presentation will both honour her, Lesley and the excellent work of her composer husband. Many of his works would find permanent friends if they were easily available.

List of Works

1	Suite No. 1 for string orchestra	1941-2	Joseph Williams/Stainer & Bell
2	Night Music for chamber orchestra	1943	Joseph Williams/Stainer and Bell
3	Vigil for piano	1944	Lengnick
4	Suite No. 2 for string orchestra	1944 5	Joseph Williams/Stainer and Bell
5	Piano Concerto No. 1	1944	Lengnick
6	Quintet for Bassoon & strings	1945	Stainer & Bell
7	2nd Nocturne for Chamber orchestra	1946	Stainer & Bell
8	Intermezzo for Chamber ensemble	1946	Stainer & Bell
9	2 Songs of A. E. Housman for voice and piano	1946	Stainer & Bell
10	Ballade for piano	1947	Stainer & Bell
11	Put away the Flutes (W. Rodgers) Voice & 6 instruments	1947	Lengnick
12	Quartet for violin, clarinet, viola, bassoon	1948	Lyche, Oslo
13	Fuga Giocosa for orchestra	1948	Stainer & Bell
14	Threnos & Toccata for piano	1948	Lengnick
15	Gold Coast Customs Speakers, male chorus & orchestra	1949	Lengnick

16	Passacaglietta in nomine Arnold Schoenberg for string quartet	1949	Lengnick
17	Overture to a Drama for orchestra	1949	Stainer & Bell
18	Poem for 22 strings	1950	Joseph Williams/Stainer & Bell
19	Gondoliera for cor anglais & piano	1950	Schott
20	The Riverrun (James Joyce). Speaker & orchestra	1951	Schott
21	Piano Sonata	1951	
22	The Shadow of Cain (Edith Sitwell) Speakers, male chorus and orchestra	1951	
23	Symphony No. 1 Orchestra	1952-53	Schott.
24	Concertante for piano, strings & percussion	1954	Schott
25	3 Songs of Jocelyn Brooke Voice and piano	1954	Faber
25 b	3 Songs of Jocelyn Brooke High Voice and ensemble of 13 players	1954	Faber
26	Divertimento for flute and piano		Schott
27	Piano Concerto No. 2		Schott
28	Aubade for horn and strings	1955	Schott
29	Suite for piano	1955	Schott
30	Les Noctambules Ballet in 1 Act; Orchestra	1956	Schott
30a	Les Noctambules Suite; Orchestra	1956	Schott
31	Toccata alla Passacaglia; Organ	1957	Schott
32	Suite for Clarinet in B flat and piano	1956	Schott
33	Symphony No. 2 for Orchestra	1956-8	Schott
34	Variations & Finale for ten instruments –		
34a	The Great Peacock ballet in one act (from Op 34) for orchestra	1958	Schott
35	The Diary of a Madman chamber opera in 1 act (after Nikolai Gogol)	1958	Schott
36	Symphony No. 3	1960	Schott
37	3 Movements for string quartet	1960	Schott
38	Symphony No. 4	1962	Schott
39	Dualities, Ballet in 6 Scenes; Orchestra	1963	Schott
40	Counting the Beats (Robert Graves); Voice and piano	1963	
41	The Photo of the Colonel, opera (Eugène Ionesco)		Schott
42	Song of the Sun (Neuhuatl poems) SATB unaccompanied		
43	Symphony No. 5	1964	Schott
44	Scherzi for Small orchestra		Schott
45	Prelude on a Theme of Alan Rawsthorne; Piano	1965	Faber
46	The Canticle of the Rose (Edith Sitwell) SATB	1965	Faber
47	Oxus - Scena (Matthew Arnold) for high voice and orchestra	Faber	
48	Hamlet, opera in 3 acts	1965-68	Faber
48a	Hamlet Suite baritone and orchestra or orchestra alone	1968	Faber
49	Sinfonietta for 9 instruments		Faber
50	Ophélie (Rimbaud) Voice and piano	1969	Blackwell
51	I have a New Garden; Chorus unaccompanied	1969	Novello
52	Jerusalem (Blake) for Speakers, tenor solo, chorus and orchestra	1970	MS
53	Zodiac Variations for Small orchestra.	1970	Faber
54	Divertimento for Seven Clarinets	1970	Faber
55	The Donkey (G. K. Chesterton) Voice and piano	1971	Blackwell
56	Labyrinth for orchestra		Faber
57	Fantasia; Cello and piano	1971	Faber
58	Les Fleurs du Mal (Baudelaire); Voice, horn and piano	1972	Blackwell

59	Fantasy-Toccat; Organ	1973	Faber
60	Kubla Khan (Coleridge) Tenor solo, chorus and orchestra	1974	Faber
61	Five for Guitar solo	1974	Faber
62	Rhyme: Rude to my Pride (James Michie) male voices unaccompanied	1974	
63	Nocturnall (Donne); Voice and piano	1974	Blackwell
64	Il Penseroso e L'Allegro(after Milton); Cello and piano	1974	MS
65	Skimbleshanks, the Railway Cat (T. S. Eliot) speaker and instruments	1975	Faber
66	Contemplations(Anne Bradstreet) mezzo and orchestra	1975	Faber
67	My Beloved Spake (Song of Solomon) chorus and organ	1976	MS
68	Fantasia on British Airs; 5 Military bands	1976	MS
69	Dr Faustus; The Devil's Jig (Robert Nye) speakers chorus and orchestra	1977	MS
70	The Serpent Son (Orestia) speakers chorus and orchestra	1978-9	MS
71	Tamesis; Orchestra	1979	Faber
72	Prelude, Nocturne and Chase for 4 Horns	1979	Faber
73	2 Sitwell Songs; Voice and piano	1980	MS
74	The Apollonian Whale; Voice, cello and piano	1980	Whalesound, Canada
75	A Winchester Overture; Orchestra	1981	Faber
76	Cyprus Dances for Organ	1981	MS
77	Three Ages for Orchestra	1982	MS
78	Paraphrase on themes of Liszt for two piano	(1982)	MS

WITHOUT OPUS NUMBER

Symphony 1937-8 entrusted to Lennox Berkeley		
String Quartet	1939	
Two Songs from James Joyces's Chamber music	1935	
Highland Reel; Orchestra	1946	Stainer & Bell
The Owl and the Pussycat (Lear); Speaker & 3 instruments	1951	O. U. P.
2 Practical Cats (Eliot); As above	1953	O. U. P.
Song of the Birds; Chorus unaccompanied	1963	Novello
Burn-Up (Royston Ellis); Speaker & ensemble	1962	Schott
Birthday Ode for Fiona		MS
A Little Hymn to Mary - Chorus unaccompanied SATB	1966-7	Faber
From "The Divine Narcissus"; Chorus unaccompanied	1969	Novello
Cat Variations – Variations on the theme from (‘Peter and the Wolf’; Clarinet & piano)	1971	Faber
A Little Waltz for Violin and piano	1972	MS
Three Romantic Pieces for Violin and piano	1976	MS

ARRANGEMENTS

Arne. Rule Britannia! Tenor, chorus & orchestra	1947	Stainer & Bell
Adam. Giselle (original Small orchestra version)	1970	Faber
Liszt. Csardas Macabre; orchestra	1948	Stainer & Bell
Liszt. La lugubre gondola; orchestra	1963	Schott
Liszt. Sonata in B minor (Ballet, Marguerite & Armand)	1963	Schott
Rosengrave. 3 Pieces for string orchestra	1939	Faber

MUSIC FOR THE HOFFUNG FESTIVALS

Lochinavar
Punkt Kontrapunkt
Duet The Barber of Darmstadt

MUSIC FOR STAGE

Favonia (Lesley Storm)
Out of this World
Troilus and Cressida (RSC)
The Duchess of Malfi (RSC)

TV

Monsieur Barnett (Anouilh)
To the Frontier (Giles Cooper)
Epic '66
Henry 1V (Pirandello)
As A Man Grows Older (Svevo)
The Pistol Shot (Pushkin)
Theatre 625 (1966-68)
Wednesay Play (1968)
The Monsters
Tide of traffic (1972)
The Serpent Son (Aeschylus) Op 70
Dr Who: The Myth Makers
Classic Windowa (1995)

RADIO FEATURES AND PLAYS

Night Thoughts (David Gascoyne)
The Diary of a Madman (Gogol)
The Renegade (Camus)
A Gentle Creature (Dostoievsky)
Lenz (Buchner)
The Dynasts (Thomas Hardy)
Valse (Schehade)
Paradox, King
Antony and Cleopatra
The Masque of Falsehood (Peter Gurney)
The Pallingham Depression (Frederick Bradnum)
The Foundling (Peter Gurney)
A Lonely Place in a Dark Wood (Bradnum)
The Questionable Child (Bradnum)
No Going Home (Bradnum)
The Devil's Jig (Thomas Mann/Robert Nye) Op 69
Dr Faustus, the Devil's Jig
Gulliver's Travels, based on themes from Telemann
Rosenberg in the Trenches (Bradnum)
and others manuscripts locations unknown

FEATURE FILMS

Anna Karenina (1948) with Constant Lambert (uncredited)
Beyond Mombasa
The Baby and the Battleship
The Passionate Stranger
The Action of the Tiger
The Abominable Snowman
Right, Left and Centre
October Moth
Law and Disorder
The Haunting

AUDIO VISUAL CENTRE London University

Words and Music(1969?)

Casanod (1969?)

DOCUMENTARY FILM

Foothold on Antarctica

Antarctic Crossing

Land of Mountain and Fjord

Holiday in Norway

The Road to M. I. S.

Ahmadi Cargo

The Desert is Green

O for Oxygen

A Light in Nature

Greek Sculpture

The Tide of Traffic

Woodland Harvest

Storm Cone

BOOKS

20th Century Counterpoint (1954, London; 2nd impression 1955)

The Music of Liszt (1954 & 1956, London; revised ed. New York 1967)

Ballet Music - An Introduction (1958, London; rev. ed. New York 1973, 1974)

20th Century Composers: Britain and Holland (1972, London)

EDITED

Arnold Schoenberg: Structural Functions of Harmony (1954, London)

TRANSLATED

Josef Rufer: Composition with 12 Notes (London 1954)

H. H. Stuckenschmidt: Arnold Schoenberg. (London 1959)

Hector Berlioz: A Selection from his Letters (London 1966)

Friedrich Wildgans: Anton Webern (London 1966)

Walter Kolneder: Anton Webern (London 1968)

H. H. Stuckenschmidt: Arnold Schoenberg, his Life, World and Work. (London 1977)

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