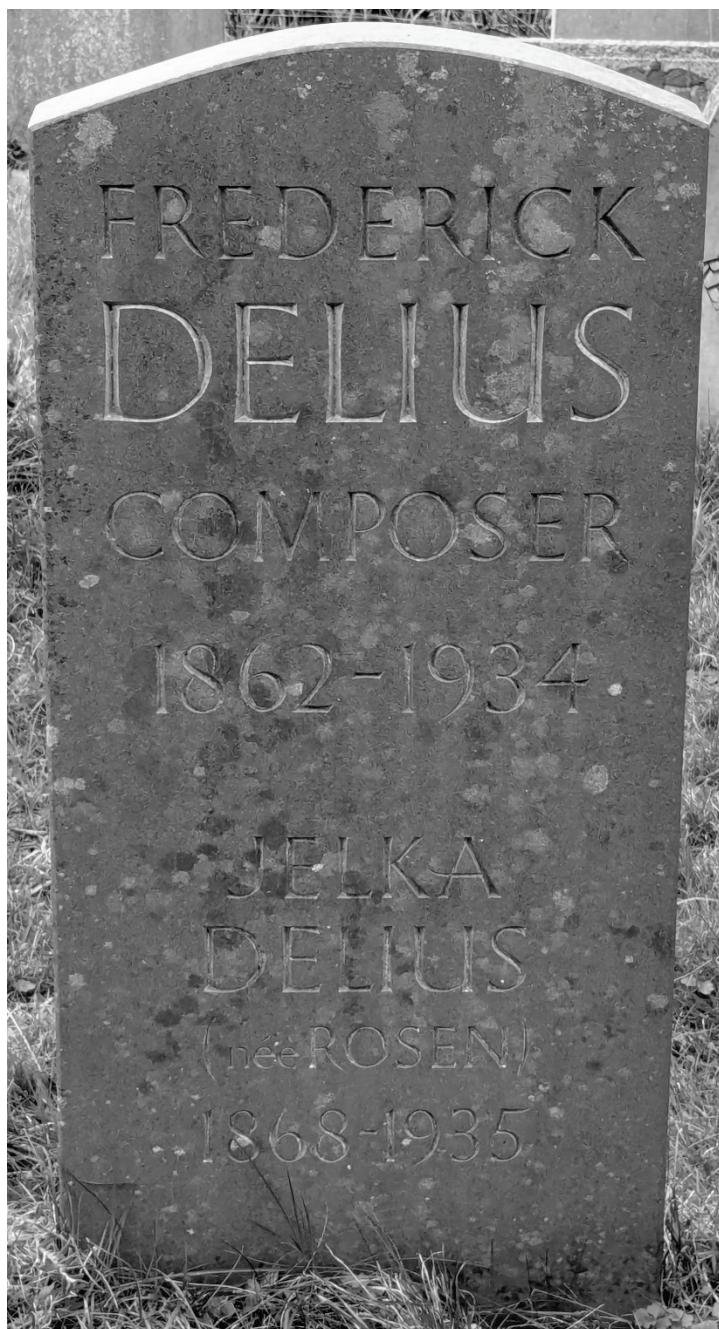


DELIUS: THE LIMPSFIELD PAPERS

Dr Graham Dixon



DELIUS: THE LIMPSFIELD PAPERS

Dr Graham Dixon, who lives in Limpsfield, Surrey, discusses papers which have been discovered amongst the Church records there and which shed new light on Delius's reburial at Limpsfield.

Speaking at the interment ceremony for Frederick Delius, Sir Thomas Beecham described the village of Limpsfield in glowing terms:

‘I think that it may be said that nowhere in the breadth of this land could be found a fairer spot than this to satisfy his wish’.

He was, of course, referring to the composer's known desire to be buried in a country churchyard in the south of England.¹ Those of us who have the pleasure of living in Limpsfield permanently would agree that it lives up to its promise, with its ancient church, unspoiled National Trust woodland, and its friendly community. For me, with a background as a musicologist specialising in the Baroque, there was a bonus when we moved here in 2021. The presence of Frederick Delius in the churchyard, besides other people from his circle, made me turn my mind towards an area of music and culture in which I previously had little interest. It soon became apparent that while visitors came to see the grave of Frederick, everyone overlooked the fact that his wife, Jelka, had been a highly accomplished artist. After a research trip to Grez-sur-Loing and correspondence with various galleries, I was able to raise awareness of Jelka Delius and her art by giving two presentations in the village, complemented by coverage in the local press. During this period it was a pleasure to walk into the village shop and find people discussing her paintings!

As people started to speak of Delius, Anthony Horsford, who has a strong interest in Limpsfield church history and has been involved with the parish records over many years, mentioned to me that he recalled having seen papers relating to Delius among the church documents. Before long Anthony had efficiently located the files and we were sitting in the Church Office with the documents spread out on the table.² The correspondence sheds new light on the circumstances of the reburial of Delius in Limpsfield. By titling this article ‘The Limpsfield Papers’ it is my intention to present this new find to the Delius community as a unified collection, preserved by successive Limpsfield rectors from the 1930s onwards. I am fully aware that in future scholarly work the documents will be cited piecemeal for their

individual significance to the Delius narrative. During the preparation of this article further documentation came to light among the papers of Dr Lionel Carley, which are in the possession of the Delius Trust.³ These papers include his typewritten transcriptions of letters. At the time of writing it is not possible to work out where he saw the originals. In order that there is no confusion between these and the Limpsfield documents, the Carley transcriptions have been cited in the text and included in full in the Appendix, whereas the complete text of the Limpsfield material is included in the body of the article.

Even after the publication of these documents, discussion will doubtless continue about the fact that Limpsfield became the final resting place of both Frederick and Jelka. We know that two of the main protagonists, Eric Fenby and Frederick's sister, Clare, both bitterly regretted the choice of Limpsfield.⁴ Fenby would rather have seen Frederick's body remain in Grez-sur-Loing, while Clare expressed her vehement opposition to Limpsfield, arguing strongly in *Frederick Delius: Memories of My Brother* that he should have returned to his native Yorkshire, where there are equally beautiful villages and churches of even greater antiquity.⁵ She also speaks passionately about the determination on the part of Bradford's civic leaders to see their son appropriately honoured. Suffice it to say, the documents reveal that there was a cordial relationship between Jelka, Eric Fenby and the Rector of Limpsfield, the Rev. Charles Steer.⁶

Before starting with the documents, it is worth considering how Limpsfield was in the 1930s. The High Street leading to the church has changed little since that time. A book from 1932, *Oxted and Limpsfield and Neighbourhood*,⁷ paints a charming picture, which is worth quoting at length to set the scene:

'Few places present the charm of the English village better or in more typical fashion than Limpsfield. At its north end a most dignified and picturesque church standing high above the road, approached by steps and by a long sloping path leading to a fine lych gate; a charming old Georgian rectory opposite, and an old Manor House separated from the churchyard by a wall such as is never built in these days. At the south end of the village a triangular green sloping up a steep hill, beset by fine trees, a picturesque inn at one corner ... Between the church and the green, the village street lined with old houses and cottages built of timber and plaster, of iron stone, sand stone, grey brick and red brick, set forward and back in endless variety and beauty and with hardly a modern

building of any kind except a fake antique Post Office and workshop. A village set on strongly sloping ground with all the charm and interest that such a site implies: an architectural record of all times from the Norman Conquest onwards; the buildings mingled with the trees and walls of old gardens, backed up by the hills ...'

Fenby has suggested that such a village, offering a picturesque rural environment untouched by modernity, might have provided an effective substitute for a Norwegian resting place in Delius's mind.⁸ Beautiful though it is, Limpsfield could never be mistaken for a Norwegian village. It is unmistakably Surrey. Burial in Norway would have been out of the question. The composer received no acclaim in his beloved Norway; his reputation had never recovered from the occasion when he scandalised the population by making fun of the Norwegian national anthem in one of his works.⁹ Boyle describes the attraction of Norway to British visitors, advancing the proposition that its unspoilt vistas and lack of industrialisation provided many English people of Delius's generation with a pleasing antidote to their overcrowded, highly industrialised homeland, scarred in places by factories and mills. Effectively, the peaceful, pastoral environment of Limpsfield, described above, afforded many of the qualities which the English were seeking when visiting Norway.¹⁰

It is well known that, following Delius's death in Grez-sur-Loing in June 1934, his body had been buried with little ceremony in the area reserved for non-Catholics in the village cemetery. The Limpsfield story begins when, some four months later, on 26th October 1934, the Parochial Church Council met and approved the request from the Harrison sisters that Delius should be reinterred in Limpsfield. Frustratingly, the minutes make no mention of any discussion:¹¹

~~The~~ A request from Misses Harrison was discussed "That Delius, the musician, now buried in France be buried in Limpsfield Churchyard. Proposed by Col. Colenso & seconded by Mr Lawrence that the request be ~~agreed to~~ granted. – agreed.'

That agreement initiated a sequence of events that was to occupy much of the Rector's time, creating the paper trail which we shall now consider.

Jelka Visits Limpsfield

Nine days after the Parochial Church Council decision, on Sunday 4th November, Jelka visited Limpsfield to inspect and approve the proposed

location for her husband's interment. The Delius literature seems to make little mention of this visit, undertaken when Jelka was already extremely frail, having been operated on for bowel cancer. The visit, which to us might seem almost casual, was seen as a significant event, worthy of mention in many newspapers the following day. We can learn about it from a letter written by Beatrice Harrison to the Rector of Limpsfield on the following Tuesday. The two women were clearly united in grief, since Beatrice's mother, Annie Florence, had died in the same year, on 9th February.

[MANUSCRIPT]

The Limberlost
Oxted
Surrey

November 7th [1934]

Dear Mr. Steer

How good of you to send me the beautiful Post Communion Hymn. I do love the words, & they seem to console one so much just now, the world is terribly empty without the beloved Presence of our darling Mother, thank you many many times. Mrs Delius was quite overcome on Sunday. She thought the Church yard the most ideal spot for Delius, & she did like you so much, as you seemed to make things so easy, & smooth over all the difficulties. I do hope Sir Thomas Beecham will supply all the details you need.

With very kind regards

Yours sincerely

Beatrice Harrison

Clearly, plans were already under way in November for some commemoration, involving Sir Thomas Beecham. We might imagine that the 'details' were around his provision of musicians and the choice of repertory for the occasion. Given that the Deliuses had a long-term disdain for religious observance, it would be interesting to know whether Jelka attended the service, which would perhaps have been the polite thing to do. Given the exhausting round of Sunday services in Limpsfield at the time (at

7, 8, 10, 11 am, 2.30 and 6.30 pm), there cannot have been much time to meet and talk together with the Rector, particularly since this was the First Sunday of the month, which merited an additional Communion service at 12.05. By this point the mother of the Harrison sisters had already been buried in the churchyard; one can almost imagine Beatrice, standing in the rain, pointing out the vacant plot, close to that great friend of the Deliuses. Far from home in Grez-sur-Loing, the presence of the Harrison matriarch surely made this location seem even more congenial. As we shall see, despite the Rector's reassurance that the complications could be overcome, the actual documentation allowing Frederick's coffin to enter the country was only obtained at the last moment.

It might seem surprising to us now that Jelka's ostensibly low-key visit to Limpsfield was reported in the national press. For instance, the day following her visit the *Daily Telegraph* reported every detail:

WHERE DELIUS WILL REST

WIDOW CHOOSES A SURREY GRAVE

The last resting-place of Delius, the great modern composer, who died in France last June, was chosen yesterday by his widow.

It is a spot in the heart of typically English countryside, where, in accordance with his last wishes, "the winds are warm and the sun is friendly" — in the graveyard of the fourteenth-century parish church of Limpsfield, Surrey.

Mme. Delius, the widow of the blind and paralysed genius, had already decided on the churchyard, and yesterday drove from London to choose the exact spot. The wretched weather, however, prevented her, in her frail state, from leaving her car, and she drove on to the home of her friends, Miss Beatrice Harrison, the cellist, and Miss Margaret Harrison at Oxted.

Mme. Delius explained her wishes to Miss Beatrice Harrison, who returned to the churchyard. There, in company with the Rector of Limpsfield, the Rev. Charles Steer, she carefully selected a sheltered site within the shade of a magnificent yew tree reputed to be hundreds of years old.

Later in the day, as Mme. Delius was being driven home by Miss Margaret Harrison, she insisted on leaving the car and, in spite of the heavy rain, visited the selected site.

"It is just the spot that he asked for," she said. "I shall bring him over from his temporary grave at Grez-sur-Loing next spring—the season that he loved so much."

Similar reports appeared in the *Daily Herald*, *Daily Mirror*, *Guardian* and, more locally, the *Westerham Herald*. While Jelka and the Harrisons were content with their day's work, others were not so delighted.

Opposition

Correspondence in the Limpsfield Papers demonstrates that elsewhere, within the wider community, some were beginning to complain. We shall never know whether the Rector disposed of other negative correspondence relating to the Delius burial, or whether further protests were made face-to-face rather than in writing. However, one series of exchanges does survive, from a particularly passionate member of the public, a certain C M Gomm. Perhaps this reflected wider opinion. Mrs Gomm was forthright and reacted speedily when she saw the reports in the press:¹²

[MANUSCRIPT]

St. Margarets,
54 Alleyn Road
Dulwich, S.E. 21.

11/11/34

To – Vicar of Limpsfield

Revd Sir

Enclosed cuttings deeply interest me as to why 'Delius' remains can be interred in one of our ancient Churchyards. I have on more than one occasion had it thrust home that such secret spots were for Parishioners only & not even for unfortunate souls like myself – whose life has nearly always kept them in the towns. I have been refused purchase of a grave in a Surrey Churchyard – which hurt very much & more so on reading these announcements. I am not sure that 'Delius' was even our Nationality or Creed.

Yours faithfully

CM Gomm

A scribbled note on the letter indicates that the Rector responded the following day. We do not have the response. Whatever it was, Mrs Gomm was not satisfied:

[MANUSCRIPT]

St. Margarets,
54 Alleyn Road
Dulwich, S.E. 21.

18/11/34

To the Revd C. Steer

Dear Vicar

Thank you for your letter – re – burial of ‘Delius’ but you fail to answer my question? Why is a foreigner that died abroad & not a member of the Church of England to be brought & buried in a spot that very many of our own people would desire & yet are not entitled to. I feel this is a breach of trust in your beautiful Churchyard & this is the view of several of my friends that I have spoken to. Do you not think it would be as well to again put this before your Church Council. It seems to me to require greater publicity altogether. The latter part of the cutting sent to you from Daily Telegraph dated 10/11/34 alone should have serious consideration.

Yours faithfully

C M Gomm

It looks as if the date of the cutting was incorrect in the letter, since the *Daily Telegraph* makes no mention of the Delius question on 10th November. The only paper to refer to Delius on that day is the *Westerham Herald*, and it is unlikely Mrs Gomm was reading that, unless she was staying in the area. It is not clear which paragraph she was referring to. However, the Rector must have thought he had already replied and took no action. Clearly, Mrs Gomm’s research was continuing:

[MANUSCRIPT]

St. Margarets,
54 Alleyn Road
Dulwich, S.E. 21.

20/11/34

To Revd Steer

I'm now able to inform you that 'Delius' was born at Bradford in 1862 & died at Fontainebleau France. I still have no information as to his Creed.

Yours faithfully

C M Gomm

This would seem like pointing out the obvious, suggesting that Mrs Gomm had not previously been aware of Delius's career and fame. It should also be said that having spent time with the widow, the Rector would himself have asked appropriate questions and needed no help from this correspondent. Mrs. Gomm then tries again to get his attention:

[MANUSCRIPT]

St. Margarets,
54 Alleyn Road
Dulwich, S.E. 21.

6/12/34

To the Revd C Steer

Sir,

On the 18th inst [actually the previous month] I wrote you re Burial of Delius at Limpsfield & should appreciate a reply. I am now given to understand that final decisions always rest with the Vicar.

Yours faithfully

C M Gomm

The Rector's response to this one is preserved, perhaps because he was concerned that the complaints could escalate, and he might want to prove

that he had given a comprehensive reply. Alternatively, such a text might have proved useful as a response to further complaints. In this missive he clearly states his case; we should certainly be permitted a wry smile at the first line:

[TYPEWRITTEN]

From
The Rev. C. Steer,
The Rectory,
Limpsfield,
Surrey.

December 7, 1934

Dear Mr Gomm,

Thank you very much indeed for your continued interest in the affairs of this Parish. I must apologise for not having written to thank you for the information you gave me on the 18th and 20th of November about Delius, which I consider most interesting.

You are no doubt rightly informed that the final decision as to burials lies with the Incumbent; but I should not have placed the request for this burial before my Church Council had I not been myself prepared to accede to it in the case of their approval.

I can see no reason to alter my decision. It has not been my custom to enquire into the religious beliefs or non-beliefs of those who seek burial here, though I may mention that the description of Delius' attitude of mind in the news cuttings you were good enough to send does not at all tally with what I have been told by some who had the opportunity of knowing him intimately for many years. If, however, he was an unbeliever, I can only hope that his burial among our folk here may perhaps be of benefit to his poor soul, while it will not harm them.

Yours faithfully,

Charles Steer

The text indicates no sense of wavering and shows that the Rector had, despite being himself the sole arbiter in legal terms, consulted the Church Council. And I think we can have some sympathy for Mrs Gomm's position too, as someone who had dreamed of being buried in a country churchyard,

only to find the way blocked. However, the grounds on which she argues this in her first letter are both unpleasant and incorrect. When she protests that Delius is not 'one of us', she is unaware that he was born in Bradford and – though she would have had no way of knowing this – that he was technically a member of the Church of England by baptism. As the website of the German Churches in England informs us, the Lutheran congregation was not founded there until the following decade, otherwise he would certainly have been baptised there instead.¹³ The Rector of Limsfield robustly counters this small-minded attitude by stating that no-one's relatives need to be subject to interrogation about the faith of the deceased before burial in his churchyard. This same stance becomes apparent in a letter from the Rector to an American admirer of Delius some ten years later:¹⁴

'Eric Fenby, Delius's amanuensis and biographer, who is himself a devout Roman Catholic was much upset by the whole proceeding, as he thought that Delius, a determined atheist, should not have been buried in consecrated ground; but I told him I was sure, as I am that he will be glad to find himself with the kind, friendly folk amongst whom his body lies.'

Despite its eloquence, the letter to Gomm does not address the substantive point, why someone who had spent their life in Grez-sur-Loing should be prioritised over someone from Dulwich. Though there is no record of the Rector's thinking, one might imagine that he saw this as an act of kindness to the Harrisons, and ultimately to the Deliuses, namely finding a way in which a much-admired Englishman could finally return from self-imposed exile. The crucial point for Delius scholarship in the above letter is the extremely rare hint that Frederick's attitude towards religion might have softened in his final years. Beatrice Harrison expressed her opinion on the matter in writing in 1946:¹⁵

'Delius was never an unbeliever. He was a great admirer of my mother, and we used to talk at length about his beloved music. He had a great sense of mischief before he was ill and said he did not believe just to tease his old father, who was so terribly strict, but he always said that music was his Religion and that he would find his Ideal in the next world.'

It was surely from Beatrice that the Rector had the idea that Delius's views on religion were not as commonly supposed. However, it is difficult to believe Beatrice on this point. The way in which the letter is constructed seems muddled. She leaps from the question of Delius's religious beliefs to

the fact that he admired Mrs Harrison – perhaps he respected her faith. She continues by stating that ‘music was his Religion’. Despite explaining to Mrs Gomm in 1934 that Delius’s ‘attitude of mind’ was different from commonly received opinion, eleven years later the Rector stated in writing that Delius was ‘a determined atheist’.¹⁶ It might be that Beatrice could not bear the thought of Frederick suffering the torments of eternal damnation, and in the light of this, she consoled herself by confecting this gloss. As for the comment about Delius’s teasing his father, who was clearly a pillar of the Bradford Lutheran Church, that sounds like normal family life. There seems to be little evidence that Frederick, the admirer of Nietzsche, abandoned his atheistic position in later life.

Burial Arrangements

Apart from dealing with this and possibly other protests, one might imagine that the Rector regretted his decision in the short term, since it proved more burdensome than he might have anticipated. There was clearly wrangling about the date, and the process for importing human remains was not totally clear; indeed, the bureaucracy was completed only at the last moment. His note in the Parish Magazine, which we shall quote below, speaks of the whole affair with a weary air, rather than conveying the pleasure of having satisfactorily completed a task. One also perceives a profound sense of fatigue from a comment that the Rector makes in the Parish Magazine around this time, a strange statement, saying that he wished he could serve the parish better.¹⁷

The first impression, reading the correspondence, is to be astonished how extremely late plans were taking shape for the arrival of Delius’s coffin and the related ceremonies. This might have resulted from a combination of the personalities involved, the difficulties of remote communication, and Jelka’s poor state of health. However, it was surprising to find that in the middle of April the date itself was still a subject for debate. It might well have been that any action had to be delayed until any French documentation had been approved, after which there was an urgent need to move things forward as quickly as possible. It looks as if the French authorities were on the case in good time, asking the right questions, though the resolution might have taken longer. A document in the archives of the Delius Trust records the Town Hall at Grez-sur-Loing asking the Prefecture of the Seine-et-Marne Département to clarify the procedure for

authorising Delius's remains to leave France and be received in England. A list of the necessary paperwork is provided in a response from the Chef de Division on behalf of the Préfect on 16th April. Given the seriousness of the request, the documentation is surprisingly unbureaucratic: a written request, a death certificate and a medical certificate.¹⁸

One of the key documents among the Limpsfield Papers is a letter from the Rector to Jelka Delius in April 1935, in which he sets out his thinking at that point:

[TYPEWRITTEN]

Tel: Oxted 512

From
The Rev. C. Steer,
The Rectory,
Limpsfield,
Surrey.

April 13, 1935

Dear Mrs Delius,

Thank you so very much for your clear and detailed letter about the interment. Will you please excuse a typewritten reply? You would never be able to read my handwriting.

I have not yet been able to see Miss Harrison; they were all out when I rang up this morning. I will, however, discuss the whole matter with her as soon as possible.

I do not think that we can have the actual interment on a Sunday, as there are many things to be considered; a good deal of work in preparation and in filling in the grave; the impossibility of having the coffin in the Church on a Saturday night and Sunday morning, with all the Sunday services going on, etc.

What I should suggest is that the actual interment should take place on the Saturday, either by using an earlier boat for the crossing, or coming by the boat you mention, but on the Friday. The coffin could in the latter case remain in the Church that night, and the interment take place at a convenient time on the Saturday. On the Sunday, we could have a Memorial Service at the time you mention, 4 o'clock, with such

arrangements as Sir Thomas Beecham would like to make, either inside the Church, or at the graveside, or both.

I should think it would be a good thing to inform the Home Office as soon as we have got the actual date and arrangements made; Mr Fenby could then come armed with any documents they might require.

We will, of course, arrange for the brick or tile lining of the grave, if the Undertaker will send measurments [sic] and let us know any other details which may be required.

I will show Miss Harrison a copy of this letter, so that she may know exactly what I have said to you. Meanwhile, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

Charles Steer

Leaving aside the question of the French documentation, which was managed by Fenby, the primary question here is how the timing would work. The four o'clock memorial service mentioned in the letter seems to have remained a permanent fixture as plans developed, however, with other modifications. Given the busy round of services, it is clear that the Rector wished to avoid Sunday; after all, Saturday afternoon would also have provided a convenient moment when people could travel down from London to pay their respects.

Other exchanges, currently lost to us, must have taken place in quick succession, for by the time Jelka Delius wrote to the Rector on 16th April, Beecham seems to have decided, perhaps insisted on the date, despite the issues that this would raise for the church. It would also require some modification in the ceremonies as planned by Steer [letter reproduced overleaf].

Jelka starts with a polite, perhaps apologetic sentence regarding the date. It does indeed look as if Beecham had insisted on the Sunday, and that Jelka had been deputed to inform the Rector, who appears to have had little say in the matter. She emphasised how busy Beecham was, and that the conductor had maintained that only the Sunday was possible. He was indeed fully occupied: the Covent Garden Grand Opera Season featuring

Greze-sur-Loing (S & M)

16.4.1935

Dear Mr Steer

Sir Thomas Beecham has fixed my late husband's interment at Limsfield for May 26th, that is if that date suits you? As you know he is always terribly busy but the 26th of May was free. He says it must take place on a Sunday so as to make it possible for a number of people to go to Limsfield. Sir Thomas told me to leave the arrangements for the music to him; he intends bringing down part of the L.P. Orchestra.

I am to get the coffin disinterred here in time so that it can leave on a motor hearse on Saturday morning the 25th if it is to arrive at Boulogne in time to go on the evening boat (7 p.m). I shall be coming by train from Paris and cross [sic] on the same boat. On the English side of the Channel the english [sic] undertakers are to meet us and drive the coffin straight to Limsfield. Can you receive it there say at 9 p.m? I shall have all the papers in readiness, as everything was done at the time of my husband's death to fulfil all the prescribed rules.

But will there be any difficulty about getting it on the boat? I should like to have the grave tiled and cemented inside and deep enough to hold also my own coffin when the time comes.

My young friend, Eric Fenby, who worked so much with my husband is here now. But he will be going back to England at least a fortnight before the interment. He proposes to go and see you and discuss the whole thing with you and act as a link between you and Sir Thomas and so make the task easier for both of you. Will it be time enough to advise the Home Office then, or should that be done earlier? Sir Thomas wishes the solemnity to take place at 4 p.m., would that suit you?

I am writing to the Harrisons too but I wanted first to let you know all about our plans after your great kindness in making the whole thing possible, which I so greatly deeply appreciate.

Yrs very sincerely

Jelka Delius

10.4.1935

Dear Mr Steer,

Sir Thomas Beecham has fixed my late husband's interment at Limpsfield for May 26th that is if that date suits you? As you know he is always terribly busy but the 26th of May was free. He says it must take place on a Sunday so as to make it possible for a number of people to go to Limpsfield. Sir Thomas told me to leave the arrangements for the music to him; he intends bringing down part of the L. P. O. Orchestra.

I am to get the coffin disinterred here in time so that it can leave on a motor hearse on Saturday morning the 25th. It is to arrive at Boulogne in time to go on the Evening boat (7 p.m.) I shall be coming by train from Paris and cross on the same boat. On the English side of the Channel the English undertakers are to meet us and drive the coffin straight to Limpsfield. Can you receive it there say at 9 p.m.? I shall have all the papers in readiness, as everything was done at the time of my husband's death so fulfil all the prescribed rules. But will there be any difficulty

Letter from Jelka Delius to Rev. Charles Steer

the London Philharmonic Orchestra lasted from April 29th to June 17th and, besides other major operas, included two *Ring* cycles. While she enquired whether the date was suitable, she must have known – unless their letters crossed in the post – that it was not convenient. None of this gave the Rector very much latitude to offer another suggestion, especially since her next paragraph turns to the time the hearse would arrive, late on the Saturday night. With so many services the following day, the Rector was not going to fulfil his own proposition, namely that the coffin could remain overnight in the church. And thus, as we shall see below, the actual interment in Limpsfield was as sparsely attended as the previous one in Grez, almost one year earlier.

In the letter Jelka refers to her own burial, ‘when the time comes’. Sadly, as we know, that was going to be all too soon - perhaps no surprise given her already enfeebled, post-operative state. That, together with her personal note about the Rector’s ‘great kindness’, does indeed imply that she is not somehow the unwilling participant in a plan hatched by Beecham and/or the Harrisons, but someone who is grateful that arrangements were being made to fulfil a complex plan with appropriate sensitivity. In this regard, I am grateful to Andrew J Boyle for sharing with me Jelka’s witnessed testament, among the papers of the Delius Trust, which demonstrates that the idea of returning to England was in the mind of the Deliuses at an early stage. This contradicts the widely-held belief that Frederick had developed the idea of returning to England for burial only when his music was well received at the 1929 Festival. Already in 1918, Jelka stated in this document:

‘I wish my body to be conveyed to England and there cremated; the ashes to be placed in an urn and placed besides those of my husband.’

Aside from the cremation, perhaps a detail in the entire scheme, this was achieved. It shows that the plan had been in their minds for almost two decades, perhaps on account of the kindness they received during their exile from France at the time of World War One, and the British acclaim for Frederick’s music, which far exceeded any modest interest that might have been shown in it elsewhere. Neither, as we have already noted, did Delius receive any acclaim in his beloved Norway; his use of the Norwegian national anthem was a misdemeanour never to be forgotten.¹⁹

We also note from Jelka’s letter that Fenby would liaise with the key parties and clarify the arrangements. And by 18th April Fenby was already

in London, writing to the Rector from Scott's Hotel and attempting to make contact to arrange a visit to Limpsfield. The forwarding address he gives in Scarborough is that of his parents; clearly, he was heading there to pass the weekend with them.

[MANUSCRIPT]

TELEGRAMS
AKIMBO, WESDO. LONDON

TELEPHONE
LANGHAM 3737
3738

SCOTT'S HOTEL,
LANGHAM STREET,
LONDON, W.1

PROPRIETOR
ALEX. MILLER

April 18th, 1935

Dear Mr. Steer,

This morning I tried to get into touch with you by telephone, but you were out, and the line was so bad that it was impossible to hear more than a few disjointed sentences from your end. They afterwards apologised from the exchange.

I am going up to Scarboro' until Tuesday when I shall return here, and, if it is convenient, will come down to see you on either that afternoon or any time on Wednesday you care to suggest.

We can then discuss the whole matter regarding the interment.

Will you therefore be good enough to give me a suitable time and send a P.C. to me,

at

12, MAYVILLE AVENUE,
SCARBOROUGH

Personally I should prefer Wednesday but would make a special effort for Tuesday,

Yours sincerely

Eric Fenby

[Marginal note from Rector – as aide-memoire of his answer to Fenby]

Come Wednesday. 2.30 [from] Vict[oria]. Will meet at 3.24[.] Miss M. Harrison comes at 4 & will take you to tea. C.S.

We presume the Wednesday visit went ahead, that discussions were held, and tea consumed. It becomes clear in Fenby's later correspondence that he most certainly took charge of the situation. He, rather than the Rector, was not only liaising with Beecham about the music, but discussing the best options with Mr Archie Brasier, the long-established village undertaker and builder.²⁰ The undertaker's son was also called Archie and both were involved in the family business; we can reasonably assume that the elder one took charge on this important occasion. In a curious coincidence, the younger Archie converted two dwellings, from the 17th and 18th centuries, for his own use - it is now our home. I digress.

Transcriptions of letters made by Lionel Carley, in the possession of the Delius Trust, make clear the extent to which Brasier, the undertaker, was directly involved in the planning. For the practical arrangements regarding the burial, he, rather than the Rector, acted as the point of contact. On 30th April, Fenby wrote to Brasier,²¹ confirming the arrangements they had discussed when they met in person. The detailed letter gives the dimensions of the coffin; requests space to be left for another burial in the same grave and asks for a 'wheeled bier' to be ready at the lych-gate on account of the weight of the coffin, enclosed in a lead container. By this point, the means of transport was far from clear. A plan was being discussed to bring the body by air to Croydon, London's international airport, situated conveniently close to Limpsfield. In his reply, dated 2nd May, transcribed by Carley,²² Brasier suggests that it would be best, given the weight of the coffin, if it were lowered into the grave on Saturday evening and covered with boards. Trying to manoeuvre it during a service might have been undignified. The plan also avoided the necessity of the undertakers working on a Sunday, so it was beneficial from various

TELEGRAMS
AKIMBO, WESDO, LONDON

TELEPHONE
3737
LANGHAM 3738

SCOTT'S HOTEL,

LANGHAM STREET,

LONDON, W.1

PROPRIETOR
ALEX. MILLER

April 18th 1935.

Dear Mr. Kees,

This morning I tried to get into touch with you by telephone, but you were out, and the line was so bad that it was impossible to hear more than a few disjointed sentences from your end. They afterwards apologised from the exchange.

I am going up to Pearson's until Tuesday when I shall return here, and, if it is convenient, will come down to see you on either that afternoon or any time on Wednesday you care to

perspectives. Writing to Brasier on 6th May, in a further letter transcribed by Carley, Fenby confirmed that Mrs. Delius is in 'complete agreement' with the arrangements proposed, the immediate procession to the graveside and covering the grave until the following day. In this letter Fenby also asked whether he might travel from Folkestone to Limpsfield in the hearse. One cannot but feel sympathy for Fenby, who learned in a perfectly friendly letter from Brasier²³ among the Carley transcriptions, dated 14th May, that there would not be room for him in the hearse. It was not legal for a hearse to carry passengers and, moreover, there would be no space, since Archie Brasier himself, four bearers and the driver were already travelling. Kindly, Brasier offered to arrange a car to collect Fenby in London from the boat train and bring him to Limpsfield. We presume that is how he completed his journey from Grez-sur-Loing to Limpsfield in time for the brief late-night ceremony.

Returning to the Limpsfield material, an exchange of letters below between Fenby and Steer in early May confirms the extent to which Mr Brasier was now becoming involved in the planning, besides his purely practical role as undertaker:

[TYPEWRITTEN]

Grez-sur-Loing, (S et M)
France.

May 6th, 1935.

The Rev. C. Steer,
The Rectory,
Limpsfield,
Surrey.

Dear Mr. Steer,

I have fixed up all the arrangements with Mr. Brasier that concern him, and learn through him that you both think that the best way to deal with the coffin on its arrival on the Saturday night at Limpsfield would be for you to meet it at the lych-gate and conduct it straightway to the grave-side, have it lowered into the grave and covered temporarily with boards for the night, so that on the following day we should have part of the service in church and afterwards proceed to the grave-side for the final prayers. Mrs. Delius is in complete agreement with this suggestion. I

hope that you have not had any difficulties with the Home Office and that all will go smoothly.

The coffin will cross by the 7.15 P.M. boat from Boulogne to Folkstone where Mr. Brasier will meet us at 8.45 P.M.

I am sending an outline of the arrangements to Sir Thomas Beecham so that all he has to do will be to provide what music he wishes to play.

May I thank you once again for all your great kindness and warm-heartedness in making this difficult undertaking possible. I appreciate it more than I can say.

Yours very sincerely,
[signed] Eric Fenby

Again, we can see that, despite what eventually developed into considerable misgivings about the wisdom of the entire venture, Fenby here is openly appreciative of the assistance he is receiving to arrange something well beyond the standard remit of a village church. Here we find the solution to accommodating the busy schedule of Sunday services as well as the interment: the coffin was to be interred immediately on arrival, and not remain in church overnight.

The above letter shows Fenby is also making it as simple as possible for Beecham, who appears to have had an exceptionally heavy schedule at this point. Simultaneously, someone within the administration of the London Philharmonic Orchestra must have been checking the availability of musicians, a crucial step before deciding on the repertory. Of course, the orchestra performed works by Delius: *Summer Night on the River*, *Serenade from Hassan*, *Elegy for Cello and Orchestra* and *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*.²⁴ A letter to Maurice Johnstone, Beecham's secretary, among the Carley transcriptions, dated 2nd May, shows that the decision had been made to travel by road.²⁵ More interestingly, it may also show something of the relationship between Fenby and Beecham, revealing that Fenby – clearly working diligently – is expecting his efforts to be criticised by Beecham. In the letter he underlines how everyone he is working with is extremely efficient. He notes,

'In defence of whatever criticism you have to offer I can only reply that I have acted solely on the advice of authoritative people and have spared

no pains to ensure that everything will be carried out decently and in order without a hitch.'

No negative comments from Beecham have come to light in the documents; however, Fenby clearly felt the need to be defensive and justify every action.

In the letter from Fenby dated 16th May he turns his attention to Beecham's participation in the service, confirming the presence of musicians and noting that Beecham wished to give an oration at the graveside.

One gains from this letter the strong impression that all these complicated arrangements are taking their toll on everyone involved. Besides the legal necessities, there was the coordination of so many variables: the church, the undertaker and the musicians, not to mention the complexities of transport in France and England. Fenby was clearly doing sterling work. However, we should not forget that he was a musician, aged 29, exhausted from living through the previous years in Grez, and with no experience in administration. While darting between London and Grez-sur-Loing, he was dealing with an increasingly burdened Rector, a frantically busy conductor and a widow who was both sorrowing and ailing. No wonder he looked forward to completing the task.

[MANUSCRIPT]

Tel. 3069
Western.

4, Pembroke Villas,
Kensington, W.

May 16th, 1935.

Dear Mr Steer,

Thank you for your letter. I have just seen Sir Thomas Beecham and he tells me that he is going to bring a contingent of the L.P.O. down on the 26th. (There will be plenty of time to arrange for the seating of the orchestra earlier in the afternoon.)

Sir Thomas feels that some short announcement of the funeral ought to be made in the musical press, so that those who love his music and are able

to be present may have the opportunity of paying a last tribute to him. You will be astonished to hear that Delius was baptised as a member of the church of England and actually was confirmed when a boy! I had no idea of this until a few days ago.

Sir Thomas said that he would like to say a few words at the graveside. He is very anxious to have the whole thing conducted with the greatest dignity, so you need have no fears in this respect.

I am returning to France tomorrow. Everything is now finally settled and I for one will sigh a deep sigh of relief when the whole affair is over.

With good wishes and renewed thanks,

Yours sincerely

Eric Fenby

DATE	FENBY'S LOCATION
April 16th	Grež-sur-Loing
April 18th	Scott's Hotel, London
April 19th	Scarborough
April 23rd	London
April 24th	London/Limpsfield in afternoon
April 25th	?Limpsfield, meeting with Archie Brasier
April 30th	Grež-sur-Loing ²⁶
May 2nd	Grež-sur-Loing ²⁷
May 6th	Grež-sur-Loing
May 16th	4 Pembroke Villas, Kensington ²⁸
May 17th	To Grež-sur-Loing
May 25th	Travelling to Limpsfield from Grež-sur-Loing
May 26th	Limpsfield for ceremony
August 1st	Scott's Hotel, London

The affair moved one uneasy stage closer to its conclusion when, on 21st May, the Rector typed out the running order for the proceedings. There are three telling aspects to this document. Most significant, surely, is the last sentence in which the Rector states that no further changes can be made to the arrangements. With such disruption on a Sunday, we also note that he prioritised the Children's Service, rather than cancelling it, stating that no early admission was permitted. The village children leaving the church on that day must have been astonished by the sizeable crowds and the general

commotion. Also significant is that he had delegated to his curate, the Rev. Melville Williams, responsibility for dealing with the tickets. Normally the curate would have been responsible for services at the lesser church in the parish, St Andrew's, Limpsfield Chart; however, on this occasion, extra help was clearly needed.

It is evident from the correspondence that Williams was also charged with liaising with Beecham and his office. Things might well have become overwhelming for the Rector by this point. When Beecham visited Limpsfield, the distinguished conductor found himself dealing not with the Rector, but with Rev. Melville Williams.

Either the Rector was busy that afternoon, or – as seems more likely – he kept out of the way to avoid further discussion and changes to the event. I trust I have not done him a disservice. There might be another reason for his involving Williams as the direct contact with musicians and their representative. He appears to have had a keen interest in the arts, for a scrap of paper survives in his hand, sent to the Rector, seemingly from November 1934, proposing the foundation of a Delius Festival, much like the Three Choirs, based around Delius's presence in the churchyard:

'Is it possible to have a "Delius" Festival in connection with the church? (cf the Three Choirs). This might start in the church & w[oul]d no doubt grow to a pretty big size so as to necessitate other arrangements e.g. Marquee in Sawmill Field. But a service in the church w[oul]d remain as part of the Festival.'

Though commemorative concerts took place, no such ambition was ever realised.

Practical Considerations

The letters transcribed by Carley also give some detail about the practicalities. Fenby had called at the office of the Traffic Manager, Continental Department, Southern Railways on 25th April and followed up in writing on 6th May, confirming the verbal agreement and saying that everything was being done to comply with regulations for transporting the coffin.²⁹ A letter from E C Cox, the Traffic Manager, without date in the transcription, though possibly written on 29th April,³⁰ also confirms the arrangements for the coffin discussed on that occasion.³¹ The coffin would be transported from Boulogne to Folkestone on the passenger boat at a cost

[TYPEWRITTEN]

LIMPSFIELD PARISH CHURCH

Burial of the late

FREDERICK DELIUS

4 p.m.

4 p.m.

Burial Sentences

Ps. 130 De profundis (said)

Lesson. 2 Cor. IV.16 – V.10

Lord's Prayer

Collects

4.09 p.m.

Orchestra to play selections from the Composer's works.
(Time required for this to be obtained from Sir T. Beecham)

4.x p.m.

Leave Church by North door

4.x8 p.m.

At Graveside

Sentences

Committal Prayer etc

Grace

4.x12 p.m.

Sir T. Beecham's Address

Note.

No admittance to the Church till 3.30 p.m. after close of
Children's Service

A portion of the Church will be reserved for holders of tickets.
Applications for these to be made to Rev M. Williams, C/o The Rectory,
Limpsfield, Surrey

No alterations can now be made in these arrangements.

May 21, 1935

Charles Steer
Rector

LIMPSFIELD PARISH CHURCH

Burial of the late

F R E D E R I C K D E L I U S

4 p.m.

- 4 p.m. Burial Sentences
Ps. 130 De profundis (said)
Lesson. 2 Cor. IV.16 - V.10
Lord's Prayer
Collects
- 4.09 p.m. Orchestra to play selections from the
Composer's works.
(Time required for this to be obtained
from Sir T.Beecham)
- 4.x p.m. Leave Church by North door
- 4.x8 p.m. At Graveside
Sentences
Committal Prayer etc
Grace

- 4.x12p.m. Sir T.Beecham's Address

Note. No admittance to the Church till 3.30p.m.
after close of Children's Service

A portion of the Church will be reserved
for holders of tickets. Applications for
these to be made to Rev M.Williams, C/o The
Rectory, Limpsfield, Surrey

No alterations can now be made in these
arrangements.

May 21, 1935

Charles Steer
Rector

[MANUSCRIPT]

Paddington 8379

16 Abbey Lodge
Park Road
London N.W.8.

23.5.35

Dear Mr Williams

To confirm our telephone conversation this morning – Sir Thomas Beecham proposes to come to Limpsfield tomorrow afternoon & will look for you in the neighbourhood of the Church School.

I think the music will take about 30 minutes & Sir Thomas's speech 5 to 10 minutes.

Yours truly,

Maurice Johnstone

Secretary

of £7 8. 0d. Southern Railway agreed that the packing case could be removed at the port, prior to the journey by road to Limpsfield. Mr Cox also noted that transportation was dependent on necessary documentation and permits being in order. With his eye for detail, Fenby also mentioned in his letter of 6th May that he would require a single second-class ticket for the boat and wondered how he might pay for that. In response, on 8th May, Southern Railway informed him that he could buy the ticket for 71.25 Francs at Boulogne, or – if there was insufficient time – he could come to Victoria Station when convenient and pay 19 shillings.³²

While the planning was progressing apace, legal aspects also required attention. Clearly, the whole project would have fallen flat had Delius's coffin not been allowed to leave France or, indeed, to enter England. Though several communications above have reassured us that the French documentation was all in place, another responsibility for Fenby, it is astonishing to learn how late the arrangements were left on the English side. On 8th May the Rector wrote to the Home Office, only to be told that it was not the right office for such an enquiry. Accordingly, the Home

Office forwarded the request to the Customs Office. One letter transcribed by Carley shows the Rector writing to Fenby on 10th May, apparently perplexed to find that his letter to the Home Office had been forwarded to Customs.³³ While keeping Fenby informed, he also appears to be seeking reassurance that all appropriate arrangements had been made by Fenby. The response from the Customs Office is dated 15th May, not much more than a week before the proposed arrival of Delius's remains. The Customs Office noted that when bringing human remains into the UK the requirement is

'the [death] certificate of the Civil Registrar of the place where the death occurred, stating that the body is being removed for interment. This certificate is also required to be verified by the British Consul ...'

They also advised, without being very specific, that there may be some necessary formality to be carried out in connection with the local registrar. Time was running short. Immediately on receiving this, the Rector wrote to Surrey County Council. On 20th May, five days before the arrival of the coffin, A T Wright, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Caterham informed him that:

'... a certificate of No Liability to Register must be obtained from the Registrar of Deaths for the sub-district in which it is intended to dispose of the body. The person applying for the Certificate is required to make a Declaration to the effect that the body has been removed into England for disposal, also to produce documentary evidence to this effect.'

We can only assume that this was expedited very rapidly, since the coffin containing Delius's mortal remains arrived safely, and – we presume – legally in England. Essentially, the arrangements described led to what was announced in an article in the *Daily Telegraph* on 22nd May:

'The remains of Frederick Delius, the great British composer, will be re-interred in an English country churchyard at midnight on Saturday. [...]

The remains, enclosed in a leaden shell and coffin, will be brought from Boulogne to Folkestone by the mail steamer arriving at 9 p.m. on Saturday, and thence by road to Limpsfield.

It is not expected that the hearse will reach Limpsfield before midnight. The coffin will then be lowered into the grave, and the Rector of Limpsfield, the Rev. Charles Steer, will conduct a very brief committal ceremony.

On Sunday afternoon at four o'clock the funeral service will take place in the parish church, at which the rector will officiate. [...]'

The simplicity of the announcement belies all the discussion, decision-making, bureaucracy and preparation which led to the successful outcome. And how regrettable that, in the event, Jelka was too unwell to attend.

Media Interest

It is well known that a BBC recording of the event was played to Jelka in her last hours.³⁴ The Limpsfield Papers contain the request from the BBC to attend with recording equipment:

From BBC.

20th May, 1935.

The Rev. Charles Steer
The Rectory,
Limpsfield,
Surrey.

Dear Sir,

We should like very much to be able to take a record of the oration by Sir William [sic] Beecham, and the music played, at the interment of the body of Delius next Sunday. For that purpose, we would send down a mobile recording van, and it would be necessary to run a cable, with a portable microphone, up to wherever the oration and the music take place.

I will ring up to-morrow afternoon at about 4 p.m. to find out whether there is any objection to this. If you are out, therefore, would you very kindly leave a message?

Yours faithfully,

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION.

A Wells. pp. [signed]

For News Editor.

It is extraordinary to see Beecham's first name given incorrectly, a detail which understandably would not have pleased him. Clearly, the Rector granted the request, making for a second notable outside broadcast from the area; the first, some 11 years earlier, had involved the same family as were instrumental in bringing Delius's remains to Limpsfield. Of course,

this earlier transmission was the performance by a nightingale together with the cellist Beatrice Harrison, which took place in a garden two miles south of the church.³⁵

There was also a request from the Keystone Press Agency to send a photographer. As we shall see, there was no shortage of photographers present, even at midnight, though this is the only surviving request. The Rector was clearly disturbed by excessive photography, so we may assume that many photographers simply showed up without asking prior permission.

KEYSTONE PRESS AGENCY

20th May, 1935

The Rev Charles Steer

Rector

Limpsfield

Dear Sir,

We should esteem it a great favour if you would kindly inform us the day and time the funeral service for Mr Frederick Delius will be taking place, as we should like to be present to secure photographs.

We are desirous of obtaining these photographs for publication in the London and Provincial Press, as well as in the newspapers abroad.

Hoping to receive an early and favourable reply.

We are

Yours faithfully

KEYSTONE VIEW COMPANY

I.B. Brand

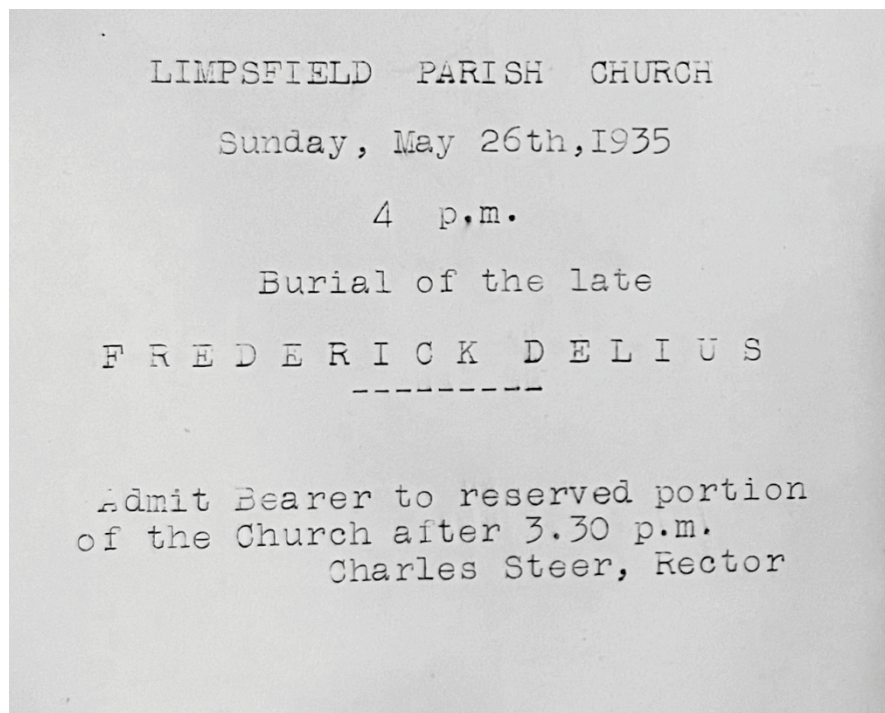
Editor.

The Ceremony

Apart from a specimen ticket filed away, no information about the conduct of the ceremony itself on the day emerges from the documents. Of course, descriptions of the ceremony will be familiar to any reader of this Journal. That said, it seems rather a pity in this account to make no reference to the event itself, the focal point of all this correspondence. As the *Surrey Mirror*

and *County Post* reported on 31st May, the coffin arrived after its long journey at around 11.30 pm:

'The brief service of committal was performed by the Rector, the only light being afforded by two flickering hurricane lamps, one at the head and the other at the foot of the grave, and, intermittently, by the startling glare of the flashlights of the Press photographers. The only mourners were Mr. Eric Fenby, who was Delius's secretary-companion and his friend, and Miss May Harrison.'³⁶



Entrance ticket for the burial of Frederick Delius

To fill this void regarding the main ceremony, I include below a few paragraphs, selected unapologetically with a Limpsfield bias, from a relatively succinct *Daily Telegraph* report of 27th May:

‘On this radiant afternoon, in a scene homely and harmonious, Frederick Delius’s last desire was carried into effect – the desire that his resting-place should be an English village churchyard. [...]

Delius, lover of beauty and master of harmony, would have approved of her [Jelka’s] choice of this green valley under the ramparts of the North Downs, and of this country graveyard watched over by Limpsfield Church, which has seen the seasons and generations of 700 years come and go. [...]

There could not have been a lovelier May day. The new green looked burnished by the sun. It seemed as though Nature were participating in the last honours accorded to the poetic musician whose best inspiration had always been her beauty. This day was the last of Delius’s harmonies. [...]

Limpsfield church was far too small for the attendance. An hour before the service there was a queue at the south porch. It included parties of students from the London schools of music. Some were in ramblers’ shirts and shorts. Numbers of eminent musicians were present, including Dr. Vaughan Williams. [...]

A hundred yards from Limpsfield Church we had, a few minutes before, listened to the cuckoo piping its minor thirds, hidden in greenery. [...]

The grave lies in the shadow of a veteran yew. The musician’s admirers who make a pilgrimage there will be rewarded with one of the pleasantest of prospects, with the downs to the north, a smiling valley eastward, and close at hand the 13th century church, with all tones of grey and brown in its weathered stones.’

One of the few eye-witness accounts of the ceremony is found in the diaries of the music critic, author and concert promoter, Felix Aprahamian, who had visited Grez-sur-Loing less than a year before the composer’s death.³⁷ As well as listing the notable attendees, he provides some interesting details. Aprahamian felt it was inappropriate that the Limpsfield Tennis Club close to the church was carrying on unaware. He also notes the queue forming while the children’s service was in progress and records a ‘mad and irreverent scramble’ when the cry ‘Tickets only’ was finally heard. It appears that, with such a large crowd, Vaughan Williams was unable to enter the church, and waited outside for the ceremony at the graveside. With typical precision, Aprahamian sketched the layout of the church, with

the orchestra positioned where the organ now is, as well as recording the seats of certain notable attendees.

The Parish Magazine similarly recorded the interment mentioning those involved in making the arrangements:³⁸

‘On Sunday, May 26th, were laid to rest the remains of Frederick Delius, the composer, who died in June, 1934, at Grez-sur-Loing, near Fontainebleau. The Church was packed to capacity for the first part of the Service, during which the London Philharmonic Orchestra played four selections from Delius’ works. At the graveside, after the conclusion of the Service, Sir Thomas Beecham made an oration to explain how it was that this exile from England for so many years had wished to lie finally in an English Churchyard. The arrangements made by the Wardens, Sidesmen and Mr. Brasier were perfect, as was the afternoon, so that a notable ceremony was carried out in a manner befitting the traditions of Limpsfield. The news of Mrs. Delius’ death has come during the writing of these words. May they rest together in peace.’

On a more prosaic note, the Parish Magazine reported in July that the Parochial Church Council had noted that the burial had taken place, following their decision:³⁹

Church Council.

Note of meeting held at Rectory, June 17th

[...]

Churchyard. Officially reported that in accordance with permission granted by P.C.C., Frederick Delius and Mrs. Yelka [sic] had been buried in the Churchyard.

Here it is mentioned that Jelka had joined her husband in the churchyard in a ceremony which had taken place only four days later. *The Daily Telegraph* reported this in its ‘In Memoriam’ column on 31st May:

‘Mrs. Delius was buried yesterday by the side of her husband in the village churchyard at Limpsfield, Surrey. The simple burial service in which there was no music, was taken by the Rev. C. Steer, the vicar [sic].

Many old friends of the composer and his wife were present, including Miss Margaret Harrison, a violinist to whom the composer had dedicated some of his works; Dr. and Mrs. F. Rosen, a brother and sister-in-law of the widow, and Miss Peggy Delius, a niece. Mr. P. Emmanuel represented

Sir Thomas Beecham, and among others present were Mr. Patrick Hadley, Mr. Kennedy Scott, Mr. Lionel Tertis, and Mr. and Mrs. Howard[-]Jones.

Once again Felix Aprahamian made the journey to Limpsfield ‘to honour the memory of a sweet and gracious old lady’.⁴⁰ As well as mentioning who was in attendance, Aprahamian noted that it was Ascension Day and the ‘white blooms’ in the church made it look particularly lovely. Having arrived early, he walked ‘a narrow footpath running alongside the length of the churchyard’, remarking ‘The utter tranquillity was astounding – one ought to grow up a saint in such surroundings’. When it came to the interment, Aprahamian recalled that,

‘The churchyard was bright and warm and all was beautiful. Just as the coffin was lowered into the grave the plough in the field yonder slowly crossed the gap between two trees’.

In his diary he recollects,

‘Slowly I left the place and made for Oxted – the last chapter had been written’.

The Aftermath

Before long, in July 1935, the Church Council turned its mind to practical matters, again reported in the Parish Magazine:⁴¹

Parochial Church Council.

The Council met at the Church Room on Monday, July 22nd, at 8.15 p.m.

The Churchyard Committee was [...] asked to take steps for marking the “Delius” grave.

The monthly Rector’s Letter in the Parish Magazine for June conveys the impression of someone wearied by the whole affair. Steer makes no appreciative remarks about either Frederick or Jelka, says nothing about what an exceptional occasion it had been, and neither does he, as the Curate might have done, float the idea of a Delius festival. Only the sound of the cameras and the brilliance of their flashlights seem to have remained in his mind.⁴²

‘Though the clicking of cameras was not so loud as the roar of guns, the other circumstances of the burial of Frederick Delius strongly reminded me of the preliminary bombardment before some great attack in the dark during the war. From all sides there came the flashes of the magnesium lights as we lowered the coffin to its resting place after its long journey

from France. The actual Funeral Service the next afternoon, Sunday, May 26th, was a great contrast; the quiet and orderliness and reverence of everyone was a great relief; cameras, though present, were not obtrusively so, and there was ample justification for Sir Thomas Beecham's remark that no more beautiful spot and more fitting surroundings could have been found in England.'

Understandably, the Rector is extremely proud of the beauty of the village, mentioned by Beecham in his speech. Of the composer and his artist wife, nothing is said.

Soon afterwards, the Rector had good reason to be out of sorts. We do not have his original letter, but Fenby's reply records that the Rev. Charles Steer was not best pleased:

TELEGRAMS
AKIMBO, WESDO. LONDON

TELEPHONE
LANGHAM 3737
3738

SCOTT'S HOTEL,
LANGHAM STREET,
LONDON, W.1

PROPRIETOR
ALEX. MILLER

Aug[ust] 1st 1935

Dear Mr. Steer

Mr Johnson has just passed on your letter of July 31st. to me, and I am shocked to read its contents. In the first place the Harrisons offered to care for the grave and assured me that they would delight in it. That was one of the reasons why they first suggested Limpsfield. Secondly, I was told by Miss May Harrison that sometime had to elapse before a stone could be erected, and this is the sole reason for what might seem neglect, otherwise I should have been down to see your local stone-mason long ago. I will write to the Harrisons immediately. If they cannot under-take to look after the grave I will pay for its annual care myself.

I gave Mr. Brasier the address of the executors, Bennett & Co, 74 Gt. Russell Street, and they told me that they had received his account and

would attend to it as soon as the very complicated estate had been settled. However, I will call tomorrow and remind them again.

I deeply regret that you have been compelled to write about these matters, but I can assure you that it is through no fault of mine,

Yours truly,

Eric Fenby

P.S. if the estate can erect the stone at once I will come and choose a simple design next week.

Two issues clearly needed to be resolved urgently: the provision of a headstone for the grave and payment for the undertaker. Fenby was evidently distressed by what appears to be neglect of duty by the Harrisons; after all, their mother's grave was close by, and it would seem only natural that they should have offered to arrange matters, living in the area. Fenby showed himself to be highly conscientious and offered to resolve matters from his own pocket if the Harrisons did not act swiftly. My sympathy is with the village undertaker, Mr. Brasier, who had travelled to Folkestone and prepared the grave, only to find that no remuneration was yet forthcoming. That the village undertaker needed to pursue a firm of London Solicitors and wait for his payment seems unacceptable. Again, Fenby, clearly realising the complexity of all this, had the decency to call the Solicitors and see what could be accomplished. As far as the gravestone is concerned, that is another story, for another day. However, the Limpsfield archives do return to that theme many years after the reburial.

It seems a pity to conclude this article on such a sour note. After all, we have been thinking about the homecoming of one of England's greatest composers. He would surely be delighted that his desire to be buried in England had been fulfilled, that Jelka was at his side, and that his reinterment had been attended by so many, both notable musicians and students who had hiked to Limpsfield for the occasion.

A Poetic Tribute

It seems appropriate, therefore, to leave the last word to a member of the public, not a musician, but an estate agent, who simply admired the music of Delius. On hearing that his remains were being transported to Limpsfield, Percival Callow penned a poem in honour of the composer, and

generously suggested that the Rector might have it printed and sold for church funds or 'other village purposes':

Buckingham House
Finsbury Park N4

May 18th 1935

D[ea]r Sir

Enclosed is a tribute to Delius, and I shall be glad if you can send me in the enclosed stamped envelope the time of interment. If you care to make a postcard of my poem and sell it to pilgrims for Church funds or other village purposes, do so. The copyright is with me.

Y[our]s truly

Percival L. Callow

Surely, his spontaneous gesture, that of a genuine music-lover, an amateur who simply loved the music, makes a pleasing conclusion to our journey through the Limpsfield Papers:

Limpsfield Churchyard May 24th [sic] 1935

If from some happier clime he sees
This little band of devotees
His latest wish fulfil;
By them his ashes laid to rest
In Churchyard old – 'twas his request –
Upon a Surrey hill;
Then deep and quiet – his joy today,
While they, their avocations stay
To do his gentle will.

Oh let us glory in the deed
Who now a mighty column lead
Along this reverent earth,
A concourse, measureless, sublime
Whose end shall be the end of time,
And they proclaim the worth
Of Delius, great and glorious "dead" –
Lay laurels on this garden bed
Till ceases human birth.

Percival L. Callow
Sat: Morn: May 18th 35

Epilogue: A Voice from the Grave

Just when, we presume, the Rector thought that the frenzy had died down and village life could return to normal, an article concerning Delius arrived in the post, which surely shocked him. It is inscribed 'with the Author's Compliments'. The Rector would have been surprised, since the colleague who sent it to him, the Rev. Charles L Tweedale, was an enthusiastic proponent of spiritualism, which involves the practice of contacting the dead using a spirit medium. This activity had been roundly condemned by the Church of England on various occasions, and indeed the Bishop of London had only recently been very forthright in censuring such goings-on. This was clearly the topic of the moment, since the 18th July 1935 edition of *Light on Spiritualism and Psychical Research* started with a lengthy refutation of the bishop's position. Tweedale was well known in such circles as the author of *Man's Survival After Death*, which ran into multiple editions.⁴³ In the article entitled 'PSYCHIC FORECASTS FULFILLED: PASSING OF DELIUS AND HIS WIFE', published in the same journal on 6th June, 1935, Tweedale described how his wife had prophesied Frederick's death and that of Jelka. At the time of Jelka's death, a Swiss musical box in their house played spontaneously, without being wound up. More astonishing is the report of the voice of the composer from beyond the grave, commanding his sister to record her memories of him, and giving her a strict deadline of 24 months to accomplish the task. Tweedale contacted Delius's sister, Clare, and indeed we have the memoir.⁴⁴ In the preface, Clare Delius speaks of the incident in a rather sceptical manner, but it does look as if we owe her biography to spiritualist intervention. In the excerpt below, Tweedale himself recounts the strange happenings:⁴⁵

'On 25th June, 1934, a little more than a fortnight after his death, about 12 noon, an apparition which we have often seen appeared and vanished through the door of my study, and my wife and I sat, and C-----, one of our Spirit communicators, came and said: "I have a message. I want you to ask the sister of Delius to look up and arrange all the facts about him – just as men did with me. This must be done within 24 months."

I wrote to Mrs. Black, Delius' sister, telling her of this. She was rather aghast at the magnitude of the task, but a few weeks after she paid us a visit and told us that the book had been begun.'

The Rector of Limpsfield often put a characteristic scribble on letters to note that a reply had been sent. In this case, there is no scribble. He was

probably speechless. How ironic that Delius, described by Deryck Cooke as the lifelong

‘ferocious, hard-headed materialist of the late nineteenth-century “rationalist” type’,⁴⁶

should make some final appearance through an intermediary and leave a message for his sister with an eccentric Anglican clergyman.

One can only hope that, rather than frantically trying to issue instructions from the great beyond, Delius is quietly reposing in charming Limpsfield, reunited with his lifelong companion Jelka, as was their wish; close to his champion and friend Sir Thomas, and surrounded by the ‘kind, friendly folk’ of the village.

Graham Dixon

Appendix

Letters transcribed by Lionel Carley, now in possession of the Delius Trust. Presented in chronological order.

I wish to record my gratitude to the Delius Trust for permission to reproduce Carley’s transcriptions here, filling some gaps in the Limpsfield Papers themselves. In particular, I am grateful to Helen Faulkner, who searched for and located the following items among the documents belonging to the Trust.

Letter 1: E C Cox to Eric Fenby, probably 29th April 1935⁴⁷

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
TRAFFIC MANAGER'S OFFICE,
CONTINENTAL DEPARTMENT,
VICTORIA STATION, S.W.1.

ZGF 109/56.

E. Fenby, Esq.,
Chez Delius,
Greze-sur-Loing, (Seine et Marne),
France.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your call at this office on the 25th instant on the subject of the conveyance of the body of the late Frederick Delius from Grez-sur-Loing to Limsfield, I note it is your wish that after arrival at Boulogne by road, shipment should be made to Folkestone on our 7.25 p.m. passenger boat on Saturday, the 25th May, and I have to confirm that the rate for conveyance between these ports will be £7 8s. 0d.

Instructions have been given to our staff in order that this transaction may be carried out in a manner satisfactory to all concerned.

I note that it is your intention to arrange for the coffin to be contained in a packing case, and if it is your wish for such outer case to be removed before departure by road from Folkestone to Limsfield, this can be effected at Folkestone Harbour.

It is gathered that you are at present obtaining the necessary documents, permits, etc. and providing all is in order in this respect, no difficulty should be experienced upon arrival at Folkestone Harbour.

Should any alterations have to be made in the arrangements as outlined above, I shall be much obliged if you will advise me, quoting the above reference.

Yours faithfully,

E.C. Cox
Traffic Manager.

Letter 2: Eric Fenby to Archie Brasier, 30th April 1935

Greze-sur-Loing
Seine et Marne
France.
April 30th, 1935.

A. Brasier,
Oxted, Surrey,
England.

Dear Mr. Brasier,

This is to confirm that which I already outlined verbally on April 25th, regarding the English funeral arrangements for the burial of the late Frederick Delius at Limpsfield on May 26th 1935, namely that you are to be responsible for the preparation of the grave and the reception of the coffin on May 25th.

The length of the coffin - 1.98

The height [of the coffin] - 0.42

The width at the feet - 0.57

[The width at the] shoulders - 0.60

[The width at the] head - 0.45

(metres and centimetres)

We should like to have the grave bricked out and at a sufficient depth to allow for another person to be buried above him, and if possible could you line it with leaves? I should also be grateful if you could arrange to meet the hearse at the lich-gate [sic] with a wheeled bier as the coffin is extremely heavy owing to the lead shell.

There is a possibility that we shall transfer the body by air instead of by sea in which case you would then have to meet us at Croydon. However, I hope to be able to fix everything up at this end within the next week and will give you full particulars as soon as they are available.

Yours faithfully,

Eric Fenby

Letter 3: Archie Brasier to Eric Fenby, 2nd May 1935

From.

A. Brasier
BUILDER & UNDERTAKER
Limpsfield, Surrey.

Limpsfield, May 2 1935

To E. Fenby Esq
Greze sur Loing
Seine et Marne
France.

Dear Sir,

I have received your letter this morning and note that you may arrive by air at Croydon and also that you would like to have the grave lined with evergreens.

I have discussed this matter with the Rector of Limpsfield and we have come to the conclusion that the best way to deal with it would be for the Rector to meet us at the Lych gate on Saturday evening and conduct us to the graveside and have the coffin lowered into the grave and covered temporarily with boards for the night. This would obviate the necessity for any Sunday work and do away with the commotion which must be caused during the service of lowering a heavy coffin.

You will then have part of the service in Church & proceed to the graveside for the final prayers after which we will again cover up temporarily and place the concrete slab in position on Monday morning. Please let us know if you agree.

Yours faithfully

Archie Brasier

Letter 4: Eric Fenby to Maurice Johnstone, 2nd May 1935

Grez-sur-Loing, (S et M)
France.

May 2nd 1935.

M. Johnstone, Esq.
16, Abbey Lodge,
Park Rd. N.W.
London. Angleterre.

Dear Mr. Johnstone,

Will you please inform Sir Thomas that I have just completed the funeral arrangements for May 26th. The coffin is to be disinterred on or about the 23rd, examined and made ready for its departure from Grez to Boulogne by road on the morning of the 25th. It will travel by motor-hearse in a packing-case to comply with the shipping regulations, and cross to Folkstone [sic] by the 7-15 P.M. boat from Boulogne where the English undertaker will meet it. When the passengers have disembarked the packing-case will be removed, the coffin taken from the hold, put into an English motor-hearse and driven to Limsfield to remain overnight in the mortuary there. The funeral service is to be on the Sunday afternoon at 4 P.M. at which the Vicar, the Rev. Steer will officiate. (There is an afternoon train from Victoria at 2-30 reaching Oxted-Limsfield at 3-30) I have been down to Limsfield, seen the church which seats about 450 people, the vicar, and engaged the local undertaker, a most efficient fellow, who will also prepare the grave and be responsible for all the funeral arrangements in England. The Pompe Funèbre of Fontainebleau, a most reliable organisation, will be in charge over here, and I shall accompany Delius all the way. I hope to have all the necessary documents and permits returned to be signed by the French authorities during the course of the next week. In defence of whatever criticism you have to offer I can only reply that I have acted solely on the advice of authoritative people and have spared no pains to ensure that everything will be carried out decently and in order without a hitch. There remains one thing however on which I should be very grateful for your help. Nearer the time I shall have to send out a printed card announcing the funeral to such relatives and friends as Mrs. Delius desires to be present. Have you any suggestions as to how I might word it?

I envy you your being in London with all this music going on.

With good wishes,

In great haste,

Yours sincerely,

Eric Fenby.

Letter 5: Eric Fenby to Archie Brasier, 6th May 1935

Grez-sur-Loing, (S et M)

France.

May 6th, 1935.

A. Brasier Esq..

Builder & Undertaker,

Limpsfield, Surrey.

Dear Mr. Brasier,

I have discussed the matter you raised in your letter of May 2nd with Mrs. Delius and I am to inform you that she is in complete agreement with the suggestion put forward by the Rector and yourself that the best way would be for the Rector to meet us at the lych-gate on Saturday evening and conduct us to the graveside, have the coffin lowered into the grave and covered temporarily with boards for the night, so that we should then have part of the service in church and proceed to the grave-side for the final prayers. The final arrangement is that we shall cross by the 7.15 P.M. boat from Boulogne and reach Folk[e]stone at 8.45 P.M. on Saturday, May 25th. Will there be room for me in the motor-hearse to accompany you from Folk[e]stone to Limpsfield?⁴⁸

I think that covers everything, but if there is any point on which you are at all doubtful do not hesitate to let me know.

With many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

[Eric Fenby]

**Letter 6: Eric Fenby to Traffic Manager's Office, Southern Railway, 6th
May 1935**

REFERENCE

ZGF 109/56.

Greze-sur-Loing, (S et M)
France.

May 6th, 1935.

Traffic Manager's Office,
Continental Department,
VICTORIA STATION, S.W.1

Dear Sir,

This is to confirm the arrangement I made when I called at your office on April 25th, regarding the conveyance of the body of the late Frederick Delius by the 7.15 P.M. passenger boat from Boulogne to Folk[e]stone on Saturday, the 25th of May. All is now settled and the coffin will arrive at Boulogne by road in good time for the shipment on that evening. The coffin will be contained in a packing-case which we should prefer to have removed at Folk[e]stone before its departure by motor-hearse for Limpsfield. Perhaps it would be possible for it to remain in the hold until after the passengers have disembarked before being taken on shore?

I shall accompany the coffin from Greze-sur-Loing to Limpsfield, so that I shall require a second-class ticket for the boat. Do I buy this in Boulogne or can you send me such a ticket? If you will kindly give me the total cost and tell me whether I am expected to pay you now by cheque (if so, do I simply make it out to Southern Railway?) or am I to call at your office on May 27th, the day after the interment?

I will abide by whatever you decide. Thanking you for your letter of April 29th, and assuring you that everything is being done over here to comply with the necessary regulations for the whole undertaking,

I remain,
Yours truly,

Eric Fenby

Letter 7: Traffic Manager's Office, Southern Railway to Eric Fenby, 8th May 1935

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
TRAFFIC MANAGER'S OFFICE,
CONTINENTAL DEPARTMENT
VICTORIA STATION, S.W.1.

8th May, 1935.

ZGF 109/56.

E. Fenby, Esq.
Chez Delius,
Greuz-sur-Loing, (Seine et Marne),
France.

Dear Sir,

I have duly received your letter of the 6th instant, in which you confirm the arrangements as to the conveyance of the body of the late Frederick Delius by our evening passenger boat from Boulogne to Folkestone on, 25th instant.

I note you would prefer to have the packing case removed at Folkestone before departure by road to Limsfield, and am instructing our staff accordingly; due note is also taken of your wish that the coffin should remain on board the boat until the passengers have disembarked.

The cost of a second class single ticket from Boulogne to Folkestone will be 71 frs. 25 c. (19/-).

The ticket can be purchased at Boulogne (Gare Maritime) and paid for on the spot. So far as the cost of conveyance between Boulogne and Folkestone is concerned, viz. 7-8s., as already quoted to you, this, similarly, can be paid to our Company at Boulogne, or if you have insufficient time before embarking, settlement can be made by cheque with this office in due course.

Yours faithfully,

[Illegible]

Letter 8: Rev. Charles Steer to Eric Fenby, 10th May 1935

Tel.: Oxted 512

From:
The Rev. C. Steer,
The Rectory,
Limpsfield, Surrey.

May 10 1935

Dear Mr. Fenby,

Very many thanks for yours of May 6.

I imagine that every thing [sic] is now in good order.

I wrote to the Home Office to make certain there was nothing I had to do further in the matter, & have their reply this morning to the effect that they have referred my letter to 'Customs'. What that means, I do not know; but am sure that you have seen the necessary authorities and made the requisite arrangements.

Please convey my respects to Mrs. Delius & believe me

Yours very sincerely

Charles Steer.

Letter 9: Archie Brasier to Eric Fenby, 14th May 1935

From

A. Brasier
BUILDER & UNDERTAKER
LIMPSFIELD, Surrey.

Limpsfield, May 14 1935

To E. Fenby, Esq..
Greze sur Loing
Seine et Marne
France

Dear Sir,

With reference to the suggestion in your last letter with regard to your accompanying us in the hearse I am afraid this would not be practicable.

I With four bearers, myself and driver, there will not be room[.]

II The license of a hearse does not permit passengers to be carried.

May I suggest that you take the boat train to London and I will arrange for a car to meet you in London for Limpsfield.

Please confirm this if you agree[.]

Yours faithfully,
Archie Brasier

¹ Beecham's words at the graveside, reported in the *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 31st May 1935, p11.

² I wish to record my gratitude to the Rector of Limpsfield, the Rev. Helen Cook and the Parochial Church Council for their support in allowing me to study this material and for their commitment to making its content available to those with an interest in Delius. There exist further minor documents relating to the grave itself, dating from some years after the burial; those will be dealt with in a subsequent article. The world of Delius studies is also indebted to Anthony Horsford for bringing the documents to my attention and remembering where to find them.

- ³ Helen Faulkner, Secretary to the Delius Trust, was generous in drawing my attention to the existence of the letters transcribed by Carley, supplying copies from the Delius Trust archives and permitting their publication.
- ⁴ I am grateful to Andrew J Boyle for the broad discussion we have enjoyed concerning the circumstances of the reinterment and particularly for drawing my attention to the 'provisional testamentary papers'.
- ⁵ C Delius, *Memories of My Brother* (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1935), pp266-67.
- ⁶ To learn more about Charles Steer, there exists a detailed family genealogical site, in which he is referred to as Charles III: http://msteer.co.uk/biog/4ESteer.html#elsa7_CS3_Betty. [accessed 12th September 2024]
- ⁷ L G Fry, *Oxted and Limpsfield and Neighbourhood* (Oxted: W & G Godwin, 1932)
- ⁸ E Fenby, *Delius as I Knew Him* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1936), p227.
- ⁹ A J Boyle, *Delius and Norway* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), p306.
- ¹⁰ A J Boyle, *Delius and Norway* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), pp2-9.
- ¹¹ *Limpsfield Parochial Church Council [Minutes] 1928 – 18th Jan 1935*, p255.
- ¹² Though the Rector replies to 'Mr Gomm', research using genealogical sources has shown that this must be Caroline Mary Gomm, who appears at the same address in the 1935 Camberwell Electoral Register. Her probate calendar entry of 7th July 1961 shows that she never did move to the countryside, as she clearly would have wished.
- ¹³ Aber auch in Bradford war das Bedürfnis stark, das Evangelium in der vertrauten Muttersprache zu hören. Zuerst kam man in den Räumen der Christ-Kirche zusammen und dann im Church Institute mit Pfarrer Ernst (1876 – 1877). Am 29. April 1877 wurde die erste Gemeindeordnung in Bradford verfasst. In <https://deutschekirche.org.uk/gemeinde-yorkshire-bradfordleeds/sheffield/kurzer-ueberblick-der-deutschen-gemeinde-bradford-leeds> [accessed 12th September 2024]
- ¹⁴ J Driggers, 'Early Visits to Limpsfield', *Delius Society Journal*, 131 (2002), pp28-36: 30.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid* p33.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid* p30.
- ¹⁷ *Limpsfield Parish Magazine*, October 1935, The Rector's Letter.
- ¹⁸ BULLETIN DES RESIEGNEMENTS, 8th April 1935.
- ¹⁹ A J Boyle, *Delius and Norway* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), pp133-169 gives the detailed story.
- ²⁰ It is not certain that any discussions with Beecham would have been either cordial or straightforward, since Beecham had persuaded Jelka to modify Frederick's clear intention regarding his estate. Rather than receiving the manuscripts and £1000, Fenby instead received the piano, gramophone, books and £1000. This was clearly a matter of considerable regret for Fenby who writes about his acute disappointment in E Fenby, *Delius as I Knew Him* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1936), p255.
- ²¹ Transcription by Lionel Carley, now in possession of Delius Trust, see Appendix, Letter 2.
- ²² Transcription by Lionel Carley, now in possession of Delius Trust, see Appendix, Letter 3.
- ²³ Transcription by Lionel Carley, now in possession of Delius Trust, see Appendix, Letter 9.
- ²⁴ List of works given in *The Times*, 27th May 1935.
- ²⁵ Transcription by Lionel Carley, now in possession of Delius Trust, see Appendix, Letter 4.
- ²⁶ Address of letter from Fenby to A Brasier, the Limpsfield undertaker, transcribed by Lionel Carley, see Appendix, Letter 2.

- ²⁷ Address of letter from Fenby to M Johnstone, Beecham's administrator, transcribed by Lionel Carley, see Appendix, Letter 4.
- ²⁸ The house of the widow of Norman O'Neill, the composer; they were generous and sociable hosts, opening their house to musicians, including Delius. See D Hudson, *Norman O'Neill: A Life of Music* (London: Quality Press, 1945).
- ²⁹ Transcription by Lionel Carley, now in possession of Delius Trust, see Appendix, Letter 6.
- ³⁰ In his letter of 6th May, Fenby thanks the Traffic Manager for his letter of 29th April.
- ³¹ Transcription by Lionel Carley, now in possession of Delius Trust, see Appendix, Letter 1.
- ³² Transcription by Lionel Carley, now in possession of Delius Trust, see Appendix, Letter 7.
- ³³ Transcription by Lionel Carley, now in possession of Delius Trust, see Appendix, Letter 8.
- ³⁴ L Carley, *Delius: A Life in Letters Vol. II (1909-34)* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1988), pp456-58.
- ³⁵ B Harrison & P Cleveland-Peck, *The Cello and the Nightingales: The Autobiography of Beatrice Harrison* (London: John Murray, 1985), pp126-35. The historicity of the occasion has been called into question until recently, when new evidence emerged. See K Kennedy, 'The spy, the songbird and the sham that wasn't: how I restored broadcasting history', *The Guardian* (22nd May 2024).
- ³⁶ P Vernon, 'Delius's Second Burial', *Delius Society Journal*, 57 (1977), p8 records that the author, Peter Vernon, had contacted the aged former organist of Limpsfield, Frank Bunn, who gave a different list of mourners, 'The re-interment took place that same night in secrecy, with an attendant party consisting only of Eric Fenby, two Harrison sisters (May and Margaret, not Beatrice), the rector, the parish clerk, and Frank Bunn.'
- ³⁷ L & S Foreman eds., *Felix Aprahamian: Diaries and Selected Writings on Music* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015), pp192-94.
- ³⁸ *Limpsfield Parish Magazine*, June 1935, Notes.
- ³⁹ *Limpsfield Parish Magazine*, July 1935, Church Council.
- ⁴⁰ L & S Foreman eds., *Felix Aprahamian: Diaries and Selected Writings on Music* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015), pp196-98.
- ⁴¹ *Limpsfield Parish Magazine*, August 1935, Parochial Church Council.
- ⁴² *Limpsfield Parish Magazine*, June 1935, Rector's Letter.
- ⁴³ C L Tweedale, *Man's Survival After Death or The Other Side of Life in the Light of Human Experience and Modern Research* (London: Grand Richards, 1909), advertised in *Light on Spiritualism and Psychical Research*, 2412 (2nd April 1927). See http://iapsop.com/archive/materials/light/light_v47_n2412_apr_2_1927.pdf [accessed 12th September 2024]
- ⁴⁴ C Delius, *Frederick Delius: Memories of My Brother* (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1935). She refers to this spiritualist narrative as the spur for writing the book on pp8-11.
- ⁴⁵ C L Tweedale, 'Psychic Forecasts Fulfilled: Passing of Delius and his Wife', *Light on Spiritualism and Psychical Research*, 2839 (6th June 1935), p355. See http://iapsop.com/archive/materials/light/light_v55_n2839_jun_6_1935.pdf [accessed 12th September 2024].
- ⁴⁶ D Cooke, 'Delius the Unknown', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, (1962-1963), pp17-29.
- ⁴⁷ The contents of this document strongly suggest that it is the letter of 29th April, referred to in Fenby's return letter of 6th May.

⁴⁸ It is not clear whether the square brackets, which appear in the original, result from Fenby's misspelling, or Carley correcting a mistranscription. Rather like me, someone was challenged by the spelling of the name of this town!



