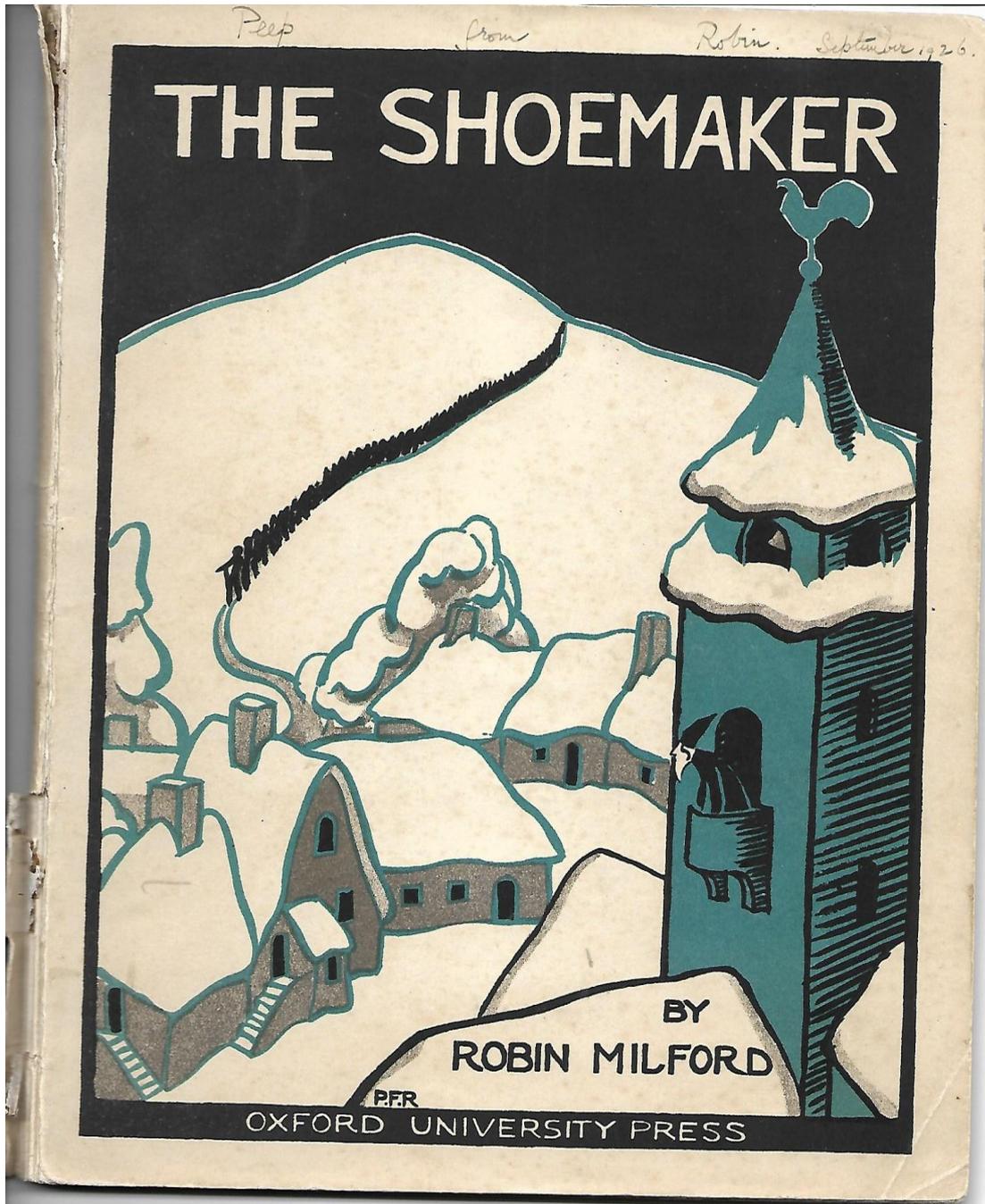


The Shoemaker

(Full Essay)



This essay is in two parts: (i) Background, and (ii) Analysis.

Background

The children's opera, *The Shoemaker*, is the first example of Milford's choral works for children. Written in 1922, *The Shoemaker* (originally entitled *A Tailor of Gloucester*) comprises solo writing, ensemble singing, instrumental episodes and accompaniment for orchestra or piano. In two acts, it tells the story of the household mice making shoes for the shoemaker and his wife during the final hours of Christmas Eve. The characters involved in the story are the Shoemaker, the Shoemaker's Wife, Boots (the cat), six residential Mice, and Merry Mouse.

At the Royal College of Music, Vaughan Williams exerted a profound influence on Milford not only in terms of composing but also in conducting and experiencing live performances of personal compositions. He encouraged a 'Composers' Club' in which performances of pupils' works were given informally in his own room or more formally at College Concerts.

Milford acted upon this encouragement and, as early as 1922, conducted an ambitious concert in which those closest to him participated, especially those who were to play prominent roles in the composer's later years when life was so difficult and distressing. In that concert, the composer's mother and father sang soprano and bass respectively, while Miss Kirstie Newsom - later to become Robin's wife - played the viola in parts of the concert and in others sang soprano.

Thus, on a number of occasions, Milford gathered together a group of young and amateur musicians - including his brother, sister, members of the Stainer family and friends - at his home in Epsom. This group began giving public concerts and it was at one of these that the first performance of *The Shoemaker* took place in 1923. Evidence of the regard in which Milford was held at the RCM, even in this early stage of his career, is demonstrated by the fact that Sir Hugh Allen, Director of the College, travelled down to Epsom for the première. This type of music-making must surely have had a profound influence on Milford in terms of practical experience and his subsequent composing of works for the young.

The libretto of the opera was written by the composer's mother, adapted from Beatrix Potter's *The Tailor of Gloucester*. Robin Milford's mother was gentle and artistic. Her influence upon her eldest son was deep. Clearly, a powerful and lasting emotional bond existed between Milford and his mother. Anne Ridler, cousin of the composer, recalled Sir Humphrey speaking of the special relationship which existed between his wife and eldest son. Mrs Ridler wrote:

the very closeness of their relationship meant that he [Sir Humphrey] kept a certain detachment and was instinctively closer to his other son.¹

Such a strong bond with one's mother was not, of course, peculiar to Milford. Many other musicians and authors of this age experienced such a closeness. Whether or not this is something particularly pervasive in Victorian/ Edwardian/Georgian Britain is open to debate. It certainly seemed widespread in artistic circles, with Lewis Carroll, Kenneth Grahame, Siegfried Sassoon, George Orwell and Rupert Brooke being literary examples, and Ralph Vaughan Williams, Ivor Gurney and Peter Warlock as musical examples. Such bonds were clearly to the advantage of Britain's art forms. Some men managed to live through such a relationship and progress to a balanced adult life. In the case of Vaughan Williams, it is open to debate whether or not the close bond with his mother, following his father's death, was a reason for the composer's necessary reliance on, and companionship with, his wives and his total absorption in work, or if his behaviour merely derived from the Victorian work/morality ethic. Just how much Milford ever disclosed of his inner-self and feelings to his mother, and how much his mother knew instinctively about her son, is unknown and probably now lost forever.

It clearly was this Edwardian middle-class background which created a solid foundation for imagination, and ultimate creativity, in Milford's mind. For the intelligent, sensitive and thinking child, the world of these years must have been a wonderful stimulation for an already fertile mind. By the time Milford was born, not only were such children's stories as *The Water-Babies*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Golden Age*, and *Five Children and It* well established but so also were fairy stories such as those written by Andersen and Grimm.

¹ Anne Ridler letter to Peter Hunter, 31 March, 1991

Similarly, by the time of Milford's 10th birthday such stories as *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *The Wind in the Willows* and *Peter Pan* had also appeared, not to mention the tales of Beatrix Potter. For a child such as Milford, this golden age of children's literature must have been a welcome and profound escape from the stresses of Victorian/Edwardian social conditions and rigidity.

The important point is that these stories for and about children (particularly of the middle and upper-middle classes) reacted with Milford's imagination from his earliest days, resulting in many compositions written for children. Other examples include such works as *Three Sea Pictures* (1924) for piano, *A Fairy Revel* (1924) for piano, and the cantata *Rain, Wind and Sunshine* (1929). Children were now allowed to escape into their own imaginations, unlike the Olympians in *The Golden Age* and *Dream Days*. Milford could not but have been acquainted with this children's literature, especially in view of his father's background with the Oxford University Press. Yet such freedom created difficulties for many fertile minds in distinguishing between imagination and fiction. Many people, including Milford himself, resented having to live in a harsher reality.

Works such as *Three Sea Pictures* (1924), *The Shoemaker* (1925), *Incidental Music to 'Peter, The Pied Piper'* (1926), *A Mass for Children's Voices* (1941-42), *Song of the Ship* (1944) and *Winter Sketches* (1948-49) show the composer's dedication to, and involvement in, the writing of music for children and young people. Thus, Milford preceded Benjamin Britten in composing for children. Works in this category are lyrical, musically inventive and interesting for the performers. At the same time they are always realistic in terms of musicianship, technique and ability.

Thus, in many ways, through his music written for children, Milford could be considered as the musical equivalent to the late Victorian, Edwardian and Georgian writers of children's stories - such as Kingseay, Carroll, Grahame, Potter, Barrie and Milne. He constantly manages to stir a child-like imagination in these works.

Even in later years Milford continued to respond to the 'Arcadian' literary movement of his childhood by continuing to write numerous imaginative compositions for children,

including the song-cycle *Joy and Memory* (1940-43) and the ballet *The Jackdaw of Rheims* (1945), written for the pupils of Downe House. He was well ahead of his time in writing such works. Clearly in manhood, Milford's mind was still alive with children's literature as shown by this comment with reference to Parry's *Pied Piper*:

I shall certainly look soon: I like the poem, and moreover, find anything of that sort about children being enchanted (or even just, taken) out of this glum, grim world at present very sympathetic, and even touching.²

Many composers of this period also wrote solo songs, part-songs and orchestral compositions for children (for example, Woodgate, Turnbull and Gibbs). Large-scale instrumental works were also composed (Woodgate, Walford Davies composed *A Children's Symphony in F* in 1927 and '*London Calling the Schools*' Suite for Children in 1932). Milford, too, delighted in composing large-scale choral works for children (e.g. the opera entitled *The Shoemaker*, 1923). His use of children's voices in large-scale choral works (e.g. *A Prophet in the Land*) also pre-empted those of Benjamin Britten.

Milford's joy in and love of making music with children is evident, highlighted by his numerous compositions for children. In her Memoir of Robin, Anne Ridler recalled her cousin's happy participation in annual family concerts at her home in Oxford. She stated, 'Robin was ready to join in family music-making, however rudimentary the technique, and liked to write music for the young'.³

Analysis

The 'Overture' (setting the scene of the Shoemaker's House on Christmas Eve when many pairs of leather shapes for shoes are hanging on the walls and some finished shoes are lying on the table) consists of a dialogue between strings and flute, using diatonic harmony. The opening melodic fragment briefly refers to the carol 'We've been awhile a-wandering'

² Milford letter to Finzi, 12 November, 1945

³ Copley, 1984, p. 10

and develops into a lively theme, employing disjunct and conjunct movement, constant time changes, sequences, neighbour-note structures and repeated phrases.

Sitting on the table, examining the Shoemaker's work, Boots (the cat) sings 'Taffeta coat', a two-verse strophic song. Set in the Dorian mode, it commences with an octave leap followed by a melodic 'fill'. It is sustained through constant time changes within compound metre and chromaticism which illuminates the images of fine clothes and shoes.

Boots, the Shoemaker and his wife now sing a round, happy that the King and his Court will arrive expecting new shoes. The 'Round' suggests the E Aeolian mode, and has a 3rd as a prevalent interval. Chromatic colour and frequent time changes (between simple duple and simple quadruple time) create further interest.

The Shoemaker's wife bemoans the fact that they do not have a son to help them in life and is comforted by her husband. Boots says "Yes, cheer up, mistress. The purse isn't empty yet". Before going to bed, Boots sweeps the floor, singing 'I have fourpence'. The introduction to this song (in the F# Aeolian mode), commences on flattened dominant harmony and two-part writing for flute and cello where the bass moves rises through broken 5ths and 6ths. The song consists of repetitions of one melodic phrase in two halves (sub-phrases A and B) set within a 5th [A-E], in which the second half is a falling 'mirror' of the first. A codetta consists of sub-phrase A in imitation, followed by a reference to the introductory phrase. The modal accompaniment supports the melody and, rhythmically, drives the song along with off-beat treble chords sounding after the bass note.

The Mice, who are in a cupboard, hear Boots knocking on their door, trying to entice them out with little bits of cheese. They sing 'Someone came knocking' (Walter de la Mare). The introduction here is in two parts, each four bars in length. In the first, six swaying F#

minor and A chords (decorated by acciaccaturas) represent the appearance of each of the six mice, in turn, from the cupboard. In the second, the harmony moves by 'step' in open 5ths, possibly suggesting the Mice moving towards the cheese placed by Boots. There then takes place a dialogue between Mouse 4 singing 'Someone came knocking' and the other mice who, antiphonally, answer by singing sets of minor 3rds. The accompaniment is strongly characterised by harmonic 'parallel' movement and light texture, appropriate to children's performance. The song (emphasising the composer's lack of dependence on tonality, hovering between F# minor and F# Aeolian implications) concludes with the words "At all, at all, at all", ending on a tierce de picardie. All the mice shout together, laughing, "But we can *guess!*", disperse, and form in preparation for a Minuet, set in Eb, homophonic style, and ABA form.

In the absence of Boots (safely outside), the mice sit down to their business of sewing, singing 'Six little mice sat down to spin'. This is a delicate two-part song employing one phrase (in two halves) heard twice in imitation. The first half (moving through a 5th) employs a rising contour, while the second half (moving through a 5th but a tone higher) consists of a contrasting falling (response) contour. The repetition of the phrase is expanded by two bars of word-decoration, moving through a minor 3rd on the word "bite".

At this point, a "Miaw" is heard outside and the mice hurriedly disappear as Boots springs through the window. Boots then commences a dance of anger on seeing the mice speeding off. 'The Angry Dance' is a one-theme movement, moving alternately between compound triple and simple triple metres, with implications of the C# Aeolian mode, F# minor and F major (thus forming definite sections). It commences with an unaccompanied dominant flute trill, followed by an 'open' tonic 5th which forms an ostinato. A winding

theme is heard in violin 1 and is characterised by conjunct movement, a neighbour-note structure, and a descant. A second section in F (where the Mice march past outside the window and make faces at Boots, who rushes at the window but cannot get out) superimposes simple triple and compound triple metres together. The former involves treble harmony, while the latter continues the ostinato. A brief return to the theme (also in F), followed by the second section material again, and references to the theme, complete the dance and end Act One.

The Second Act sets the scene of Christmas Eve. The indoor scene remains the same, with the window open. Set in compound triple metre, the Overture (in two parts) commences with repeated falling 7th chords, using parallel 5th movement, all forming an ostinato. Soon a two-bar melody is placed against this harmonic ostinato. Texturally, this material develops to include bass falling 3rds, treble movement in 3rds against the melody in the bass, and, finally, large chords with octave movement. The second part of the Overture (depicting the Mice marching in and round the stage) returns to the material of the First Act Overture.

The Mice now stand in a row and sing one of the gems of the work, a carol in compound duple metre, a hovering between E major (with chromaticism) and the E Aeolian mode, and employing a verse/refrain structure. The melody of the verse is characterised by a dotted rhythm. In the refrain, the phrase "For Christmas Eve hath brought with it/The mistletoe and holly" moves between compound triple and compound duple, with "Christmas Eve" highlighted by top register notes. The chordal accompaniment allows the melody to sing out.

Having decided to settle down and complete the shoemaker's shoes for Christmas morning, the Mice welcome the arrival of Merry Mouse, covered with snow. They enquire if he has "come over the hill from Carraway this frosty Christmas Eve" He wishes them all the season's greetings in the song 'A Frosty Christmas Eve', and then relates his tale of a solitary walk and hearing the pealing bells from all the villages in the valley. This ternary-type song, set in E, is set syllabically with changing metres, accompanied by harmonic side-steps. The text consists of the first two verses of Robert Bridges' poem *Noel: Christmas Eve*, written in 1913 (Milford would set a number of Bridges' poems in the 1930s, resulting in some of his most profound and best-known songs). This song shows the composer's ingenious and creative imagination, even in this setting of a children's opera. Its introduction employs two interesting features: (i) pivoting supertonic and tonic harmony, and (ii) the superimposing of an important melodic phrase (derived from the 7th line of the poem – "Distant music reach'd me/Peals of bells a-ringing"). This can be considered as the 'distant music' phrase, characterised by an 'apex' structure (BEB) and a rising dotted figure in the inner texture (repeating in direct and altered forms during the remainder of the song). The pivoting harmony permits swaying crotchet figuration in the upper texture, and a quaver/quaver/crotchet neighbour-note structure consisting of C#, D#, B in the middle alto texture, all in addition to a pivoting F# - E bass ostinato. The 'Distant music' melodic phrase suggests a 'clarion'-type feature, surely predicting the peal of bells and at the end of verse one. Indeed, falling quaver figuration in the middle texture suggests a peel of bells.

The 'distant music' phrases, painting "Distant music reach'd me/Peals of bells a-ringing" are further featured by a preceding 'distant music' motif in the piano, flute and string motif (heard 6 times). This motif consists of a rising/falling minor 3rd motif,

accompanied by a low register open tonic 5th – all suggesting a bell ‘round’. The evocative phrase “The constellated sound ran sprinkling on earth’s floor” is beautifully painted by harmony falling by step, with parallel 5ths (F# min, E min, D, C B min). In the final phrase of this verse, “As the dark vault above with stars was spangled o’er”, Milford ingeniously superimposes the ‘distant music’ melodic phrase (BEB) with the opening melodic phrase of the verse, resolving on F# harmony.

By verse two, the stars have caused Merry Mouse to think of the first Christmas with the shepherds in the fields, the angels’ music and the “bright stars singing”. Milford paints this mysterious scene, initially, by a two-part texture, moving through descending sequential suspension-effects against a pedal E. After a tonal chromatic flattening (suggesting C), and an eventual chromatic return to E, the open material returns (completing the ternary implication and the overall unity of the song). The final phrase of this poetic second verse “Or the bright stars singing” is highlighted by being unaccompanied. Falling harmony by step with parallel 5ths, and a resolution on an F# major chord brings this evocative song to an end.

Mouse 4 now sings a carol, with a refrain, entitled ‘There was an inn beside a track’ which celebrates the Holy Night, the Christ-child and the Christmas season at an inn (the “Jolly Jack”). Set in F, the carol uses chromatic side-steps for colour with *Vivace* rhythmic patterns derived from compound duple metre.

The verse consists of an AABCDE melodic pattern employing triadic, neighbour-note gap/fill structures and conjunct movement. Here, the word “night” is highlighted by a top note and two-part writing. The melody of the refrain employs repeating phrases, ABABIE,

where the word “night”, in phrase Bi is decorated by a gap/fill structure. Phrase E completes the refrain through triadic writing and full-closure.

Having explained that, though he has enjoyed singing and celebrating Christmas with the six Mice, Merry Mouse tells the gathering that he has been sent by the King’s Steward to see if the Shoemaker has enough shoes in a variety of styles for the Court. The Mice explain that the Shoemaker has certainly plenty of quality leather and varying styles but that he and his wife have “fallen on lean days, and they have no son to help them with the work/They heard too late of the coming of the King’s folk and the work is uncompleted”. Mouse No. 3, however, states, “But *we* shall finish it, for he is a good old man, and a credit to Shoebury”.

Returning to work, Mouse No. 6 sings a mysterious song of Christmas. “Some say that ever ‘gainst that season comes” (taken from *Hamlet*, Act 1, where Marcellus talks to Horatio and Bernardo, after seeing the Ghost). This is a strophic song, with codetta, hovering between E minor, the E Aeolian mode, and B major. Other features include chromatic harmonic side-steps and repeating prevalent intervals (4ths, 5ths and 6ths). The melody is constructed through the use of phrases ABCABCD. In the second verse, the melodic line is decorated by a flute obligato. The codetta consists of a 3-bar phrase highlighting the phrase “So hallow’d and so gracious is the time”, with a top G on “hallowed”, ending on a B chord.

On hearing voices in the distance (those of the King’s men), the mice sing together. Set in the Dorian F, ‘There were three jolly Welshmen as I have heard to say’ is introduced by a quasi-fanfare consisting of parallel 5ths. This song is remarkable for being based on a simple two-bar phrase, heard twelve times, characterised by triadic structures. Interest is

maintained by variations in the accompaniment and poetic metre changes which alter the rhythmic patterns. The following table shows Milford’s inventiveness in his use of varying the accompaniment to this phrase.

| Phrase Nos. | Varying Accompaniments |
|-------------|---|
| 1 and 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bass/chordal dialogue between the bass and treble instruments involving strong and weak beats |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flute descant with the bass/chordal dialogue between the bass and treble involving strong and weak beats |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flute acciaturas |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violin quaver figuration |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contrasting sustained harmony |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bass/chordal dialogue between the bass and treble instruments • Interruption to the phrases through a reference to the opening fanfare, reflecting the phrase “All night they hunted” • Bass/chordal dialogue between the bass and treble instruments involving strong and weak beats |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triadic quaver figuration for violins and voices against • Piano syncopated treble chords |
| 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bass/chordal dialogue between the bass and treble instruments involving strong and weak beats |
| Interlude | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flute/violin acciaturas against cello |
| 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bass/chordal dialogue between the bass and treble instruments involving strong and weak beats, as at opening |
| 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above |

The song ends with a final reference to the introductory fanfare.

The King’s Folk are now heard in the distance singing a round. This is in the E Aeolian and moves between simple duple and simple metres.

Their work completed, the Mice decide to enact a play where the farmer's wife cuts off the tail of a mouse. The accompanying music for piano and violin is based on the opening falling 3rd of the nursery-rhyme tune. There is nothing unusual in that but what is of interest is Milford's harmony – chords of the 7th moving in double parallel 5ths above which a four-bar melody in compound triple metre is placed.

On discovering the King's moneybags and the Mice's completion of the King's shoes, the Shoemaker and his wife are thrilled. The Shoemaker's wife says, "We heard noises and crept downstairs, and we peeped, we peeped!/It was a sight for sore eyes". The Shoemaker exclaims, "My kind little friends! – my diligent' kind friends!/Thank you a thousand times!". Boots, the cat, however, is sad that he has missed a wonderful supper! The Shoemaker's wife says to Boots, "Now, hark ye, Boots/You must no longer sweep up *all* the crumbs of a night; and if you have occasion to notice a peculiar smell, which *you* may think unpleasant, curl your whiskers and say nothing". Boots sings of the altered situation in "As I sat at the café", contemplating the fact that, despite what others may say, it is "pleasant to have money, heigh ho!" Milford sets this two-verse poem in quasi-carol form consisting of two verses, a refrain, an interlude to the second verse, and a codetta. The first verse is introduced by a quasi-recitative in which the melody pivots between two top Gs and has an unusual lengthy example of word-painting on the word "said" for Milford (consisting of a falling contour and a turn/neighbour-note structure), quite innovative for a children's work and looking ahead to the writing of Britten. This opening recitative implies a G minor setting, commencing with an added 6th chord. The verses are constructed through step-movement, mono-tones, and triadic and neighbour-note structures. Implying the G Aeolian mode, however, the ending of the refrain sounds a V-I closure in Bb. Other harmonic

features in the verses include chords falling by step, and a chromatically altered and paused F minor chord, emphasising the word “How”. The codetta pivots between sustained Bb and flattened dominant harmony (again, implying modality), and rising semiquaver notes in the treble register.

The next movement sees Boots dancing ‘humorously’ around the stage, between the Shoemaker and his Wife, to an unaccompanied melody played by the violin. This is twelve-bars in length, played four times, with the final presentation altered and developed. The movement shows the composer’s ability in creating dramatic imagery and musical inventiveness within a small canvas of imagination. Set in D, it suggests a jig but is written in compound triple time, and is constructed through triadic and neighbour-note structures, leaps, repeated notes, sequences and rising scalar material. Boots moves off stage at the eighth bar when the Mice appear dancing ‘Sir Roger’ (an early English dance). The second presentation is accompanied by the strings/piano and moves to the flute, while the third is played by the strings in octaves. The fourth presentation shows the ever-concerned Milford for the pianists, where he states “If the pianist finds these next 4 bars difficult, the top notes should be played by the 2nd player”. Here, the first four bars of the dance-melody remain but are now accompanied by a more sustained texture, supported by harmony descending by step. Marked *accelerando*, this presumably suggests the climax of the dance with the Mice dancing faster. But soon other changes emerge where the metre alters to simple triple time, and a two-bar quasi-ostinato (suggesting the influence of César Franck) against a flute trill is heard. These reflect the stage direction, “Tired out, the Mice drop down, one by one, and rest’, as the firelight dies out. Mouse 2 says “It must be past midnight: there are the bells”. Here more dramatic material is heard, consisting of piano tremoli, syncopation,

added-note chords (where the gentle dissonance is in marked contrast to the hitherto basically tonal harmony), increased dynamics, pedal notes, movement in fourths and fifths against a repeated five-note ostinato, and a quotation of the opening bars of the *The First Nowell* in canon between cello and viola. The image now is of distant Christmas bells at midnight and bedtime for the Mice. The Mice “troop out slowly and return one by one” in the coda, consisting of rising and falling 4^{ths} and 5^{ths} within extraordinary chromatic harmony.

Mouse 2 remains to sing ‘When at night I go to sleep’, during which the other Mice return with “a lighted candle, a mouse-coloured sleeping-bag and a Christmas stocking”. This progressive-strophic song is beautifully set in Ab, with a two-bar introduction consisting of a tonic pedal in the cello and piano, a falling 3rd (in the violins and flute) based on dominant-mediant harmony, and a rising 3rd (C-Eb) in the viola. Verses one and two employ the strophic material which consists of an 8-bar melody built on four 2-bar phrases. The piano accompaniment is note-worthy because of its ‘open’ chords in the treble piano register, coupling the voice at voice-pitch and an octave higher, while the middle register sounds off-beat harmonic notes. Verse 3 is brief, consisting, in comparison, of only four bars. The introductory material returns before a repetition of verse one (forming verse four), sung by all the mice. Milford leaves the listener’s tonal sense quite uncertain through the absence of any V-1 closure and a continued emphasis on mediant harmony.

The opera now comes to a conclusion with the mice settling into their sleeping bags for the night as Mouse 5 sings ‘Come listen, children, while I tell you a thing at Christmas that befell’. This is quite an extraordinary conclusion, telling the story of an elderly man looking back on all the Christmases he has seen and acknowledging the Christ-child’s birth

as the one aspect which has given him true sustenance in life. This is a three-verse song with tonal ambiguity (involving E, C# minor and F# minor). A 2-bar introduction of falling figuration introduces verse one, consisting of 24 bars. The first two phrases are unaccompanied, while the remainder of the verses are accompanied by simply three-part chords. Verse two moves into two-part writing (with the addition of Mouse 5), with the first half of the final verse moving to three parts, involving all the mice. Thus a climax starts to ensue. The last section employs *fortissimo* unison writing and dramatic chromaticism. This is brought to closure through a *viola A*, *decrescendo* and pause. This then moves into the coda and the arrival of Father Christmas who fills the Mice's stockings with gifts, thus reminding us that this is, indeed, a work for children. The coda is based on the opening bars of verses one and two, giving the movement a strong sense of unity, ending on a C# major chord.

Considering the success of this work and Milford's other compositions for children (piano music, works for solo voice, secular choral works and sacred music compositions), one wonders why the composer did not concentrate further on this medium.

Below is the original programme of the 1923 production.

CHARACTERS:

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----|-----|--------------------|
| The Tailor | ... | ... | Betty Ellis |
| Simpkin, his Cat | ... | ... | Kitty Bethell |
| 1st Mouse | ... | ... | Alice Stainer |
| 2nd Mouse | ... | ... | Celia Read |
| 3rd Mouse | ... | ... | Elizabeth Stainer |
| 4th Mouse (Leader) | ... | ... | Helen Nowell-Smith |
| 5th Mouse | ... | ... | Peggy Stainer |
| 6th Mouse | ... | ... | Pippa Milford |
| The Merry Mouse | ... | ... | Joyce Bethell |

ORCHESTRA:

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>1st Violins—</i> | <i>Cellos—</i> |
| Miss Coles (Leader) | Miss Coote |
| Mrs. Bradby | Kitty Bethell |
| <i>2nd Violins—</i> | <i>Flutes—</i> |
| Mrs. Waterhouse | D. Willis, Esq. |
| Mrs. Hubbuck | Miss Hills |
| Miss Croft | <i>Oboe—</i> |
| Miss Ede | David Milford |
| <i>Violas—</i> | <i>Clarinets—</i> |
| Miss Outram | Pippa Milford |
| Miss Newsom | Betty Ellis |
| <i>Conductor—</i> | <i>Piano—</i> |
| Robin Milford | Miss Nora Walters |
| | Mrs Bethell (for Double Bass) |

Scenery designed by Miss Kent.
Dresses arranged by Mrs. Stainer.
Libretto arranged by Mrs. Milford.
Mice trained in part songs by Miss Ford.

A TAILOR OF GLOUCESTER

A Children's Opera, based on
Beatrix Potter's story.

Music by ROBIN MILFORD.



Acted at
PARSON'S MEAD, ASHTEAD,

(By kind permission of Miss Elliston).

JANUARY 13th, 1923.

Overture.—The Overture is built upon two themes, the Christmas theme, given out at the beginning by the Oboe, and the Cat theme, which also first appears in the Oboe, after the Christmas theme has been made use of for some time. It will be recognised by its somewhat violent rhythm. These two themes are used throughout the opera. There is a middle section in the Overture, which appears later as a March for the Mice (beginning of Act II.).

ACT I.

“ Taffeta Coat,” *M. Milford.*
 “ I love Fourpence,” *Traditional.*
 “ Someone came Knocking,” *W. de la Mare.*
 Minuet (danced).
 “ Six little Mice,” *Traditional.*
 Angry Dance.

PRELUDE TO ACT II.

Moderato, Gavotte and Christmas theme.

ACT II.

March.
 “ Lo! here are Shepherds,” *G. W. Smith.*
 “ Noel! 1913,” *R. Bridges.*
 “ At the Sign of the Jolly Jack,” *G. W. Smith.*
 Music while the Merry Mouse departs.

“ Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes.”
Shakespeare.
 “ Three Jolly Welshmen,” *Traditional.*
 “ Three blind mice ” (a game).
 “ As I sat at the Café,” *Clough.*
 “ A Legend of Santa Claus,” *G. W. Smith.*
 “ When at night I go to Sleep,” *Traditional.*

PRELUDE TO ACT III.

(1) String Trio. (2) Piano Solo. (3) Strings and Piano.

ACT III.

An *Andante* built on the Christmas theme, while the Tailor and Cat are talking.

Finale. 1st Section. Built up on 3 Carols (“ I heard the bells,” “ In Dulci Jubilo,” and “ The First Nowell ”), and a dance tune.—2nd Section. A Dance, at the end of which the bells ring out.—A short Coda.

Hymn. “ The Maker of the Sun and Moon,”
L. Housman (Old English Tune).

(The audience are asked to stand up and join in the last verse).

O perfect Love outpassing sight,
 O Light beyond our ken,
 Come down through all the world to-night
 And heal the hearts of men!

Four years later another production of *The Shoemaker* took place in 1927:



THE PLAYERS

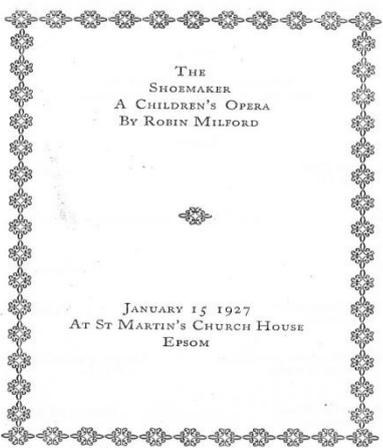
| | | |
|------------------|---------|---------------------|
| THE SHOEMAKER | | D. S. Milford |
| HIS WIFE | | Alice Stainer |
| BOOTS, their Cat | | Kirstie Newsom |
| MOUSE 1 | | Isabel Nowell Smith |
| MOUSE 2 | | Celia Read |
| MOUSE 3 | | Elizabeth Stainer |
| MOUSE 4 (Leader) | | Helen Nowell Smith |
| MOUSE 5 | | Peggy Stainer |
| MOUSE 6 | | Pippa Milford |
| THE MERRY MOUSE | | Alice Stainer |

THE ORCHESTRA

| | | |
|------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1st Violin | | Miss Coles |
| 2nd Violin | | Mrs Waterhouse |
| Viola | | Miss Owttram |
| 'Cello | | Mrs Dussek |
| Flute | | Mr Neale |
| Piano | | Miss Nora Walters |

Conductor . . . Robin Milford

*The audience are respectfully asked to
applaud at the end of the Acts only*



THE
SHOEMAKER
A CHILDREN'S OPERA
BY ROBIN MILFORD

JANUARY 15 1927
AT ST MARTIN'S CHURCH HOUSE
EPSOM



Act I

Afternoon of Christmas Eve
Interior of the Shoemaker's house

SONGS

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Taffeta Coat | The Cat |
| M.H.S. | |
| Round | The Cat, the Shoemaker and his Wife |
| M.H.S. | |
| Song | The Shoemaker |
| I love fourpence | The Cat |
| Old Rhyme | |
| Someone came knocking | Mouse 4 and Chorus of Mice |
| Walter de la Mare | |
| Six Little Mice | Chorus of Mice |
| Old Rhyme | |



Act II

Time—11.30 p.m. on Christmas Eve
Scene the same as in Act I

SONGS

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Lo, here are Shepherds | Chorus of Mice |
| G. W. Smith | |
| A frosty Christmas Eve | The Merry Mouse |
| Robert Bridges | |
| There was an Inn | Mouse 4 and Mouse 3 and Chorus of Mice |
| G. W. Smith | |
| The Gracious Time | Mouse 6 |
| W. Shakespeare | |
| Three Jolly Welshmen | Chorus of Mice |
| Old Rhyme | |
| Round | The King's Folk |
| M.H.S. | |
| As I sat at the Café | The Cat |
| A. H. Clough | |
| Fourteen Angels | Mouse 2 |
| Old Rhyme | |
| Come, listen, Children | Mouse 3 ³ and Chorus of Mice |
| G. W. Smith | |

For details of *The Shoemaker* score, please contact Peter Hunter or Stewart Thompson at the *Milford Trust* or *Lewis Archive*.

At the discretion of the Robin Milford Trust, small grants may be available for productions of *The Shoemaker*. It is quite feasible to give a 'concert' performance of the work, using a narrator. A narration is also available from Peter Hunter.

As with a number of other Milford choral works, *The Shoemaker* may be performed with harp, flute and strings.

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