

Lilburn had sought Grainger's address from the Director of the National Broadcasting Service<sup>8</sup> so that he might express his thanks personally, and the letter transcribed above is this expression. In the interim he had been busy amending the score of *Forest* for performance and when returning this to the National Broadcasting Service he asked that it be performed only by the 'Wellington orchestra & M. de Mauny', as he had 'not a great deal' of faith in the others.<sup>9</sup> He then sought de Mauny's opinion on the effect of various changes he had made to the score and in reply was informed by the National Broadcasting Service that as it was so late in the season the orchestral parts could not be copied in time, and it would not be performed until the following year. A preliminary rehearsal had taken place by March 1937,<sup>10</sup> and the work was performed in May in the Wellington Town Hall by the Wellington Symphony Orchestra under Leon de Mauny. It was well reviewed.<sup>11</sup> The critic was forthright in his appreciation: the work 'made an unmistakable impression. . . . [The composer] has given the world something quite fresh and new in his interpretation of the moods of his forest. . . . Mr. Lilburn has something individual in his musical make-up.' A detailed description of the piece was provided, and the conclusion was that 'Mr. Lilburn employs the full orchestra, and his instincts are sure. He should go far in the world of composition.'

The direct result of winning the Percy Grainger competition for Douglas Lilburn was his decision to pursue a career in music. There were also other results. That a career in music could earn money helped to convince Lilburn's father, a farmer, that his son had chosen a viable career, and the £25 prize money was of considerable assistance in travelling to London to study. In the composer's own words

The turning point I suppose was that Percy Grainger prize . . . You know the sweet taste of fame, never had it so good since. It gave me £25 . . . enough to impress my family that there might be a bit of money in it you know. Not only that but my father had a letter from the President of the Farmers' Union congratulating him on his son's musical success . . . My father agreed to send me to London on the strength of this Percy Grainger prize. He agreed to give me an allowance . . . and he gave me a two-berth cabin to go in.<sup>12</sup>

#### REFERENCES

- 1 *A Search for Tradition* (1984) and *A Search for a Language* (1985).
- 2 I wish to thank Professor Lilburn for graciously allowing the publication of this letter, which is reproduced by kind permission of the Grainger Museum Board, University of Melbourne.
- 3 A report on the results of the competition, in *N.Z. Radio Record*, 9 October 1936, 12-13.