

**CATALOGUE OF
THE IVOR GURNEY ARCHIVE**

Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucester

D10500/1/C/1/8

**ORIGINAL WORKS:
CORRESPONDENCE 1912-22:
Letters to Ethel Voynich**

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National Manuscripts Conservation Trust

Subseries Gloucestershire Archives
Letters from Gurney to Ethel Voynich

D10500/1/C/1/8

[1915-1917]

Description: Letters to the novelist Ethel Voynich, and one letter from Voynich to Scott (1936).

14 letters

Notes: See D10500/1/C/3 for a letter from Voynich to Gurney and D10500/8 for further letters from Voynich to Scott.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/1

(41.2) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [February 1915]

Description: Gurney tells Mrs Voynich that he is now 'a soldier of the King', and that it is 'the best thing' for him. He writes of his colleagues in the battalion and of the war being 'a better way to die' than the end desired on his breakdown a couple of years previous. He writes of some of the Severn villages, enquires after Voynich's health, and writes of Hermann Sudermann's *The Undying Past*.

5pp. Notes: Manuscript; ink. CL19.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/2

(41.14) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [c.August 12 1915]

Description: Gurney reports that they have nearly completed their training; writes of a 'War Poetry' supplement published in *The Times*; he is learning Wordsworth Sonnets and the opening of *Paradise Lost* ('too colossal. Too Bach-like'), and writes of other books. He has written out the melody of the Glosters march, which accompanied a 9 mile march.

6pp. Notes: Manuscript; ink. A suggested date of Late 1915 is annotated in pencil at the head of the letter. CL41.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/3

(41.11) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [Late September 1915]

Description: Written in response to Voynich's reply to his last letter, Gurney writes further on Bach and Milton, of Hardy and Meredith, and later of Chekhov. He tells Voynich that 'Walt Whitman is my latest rediscovery, and he has taken me like a flood', writes a little of the war, sending Harvey's 'In Flanders', of politics, and of Gloucestershire.

11pp. Notes: Manuscript; ink. A suggested date of 'Late Sept 1915' is annotated in pencil at the head and verso of last page of the letter. CL46.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/4

(41.15) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich November 1915

Description: Gurney writes further on Milton and reports that they may soon, in around January, be heading for France.

4pp. Notes: Manuscript; ink. A suggested date of '?Nov 1915' is annotated by Joy Finzi in ink at the end of the letter. CL57.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/5

(41.16) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [Late December 1915]

Description: A letter written shortly after Christmas, beginning with a continuation of their discussion on Milton and Bach. Gurney sends what he can remember of the Masfield he was to set as 'By a Bierside', expresses a desire to be out of the army and working, and reports that he is reading Dickens. He writes of his colleagues, notably of one who had met Tolstoi.

5pp. Notes: Manuscript; ink. CL64.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/6
(41.19) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [Late February 1916]

Description: Gurney thanks Mrs Voynich for her present, writes of Tidworth, where he is stationed, of chess, the camp pianos, Beethoven's Rasoumoffsky string quartets, Elizabethan plays, and of his colleagues.

2pp. Notes: Manuscript; ink. CL71.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/7
(41.8) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [April 1916]

Description: Gurney thanks Mrs Voynich for her parcel. He writes of his hope for an end to the war so he can return to his work, writes of his colleagues and life in the army, and of Sydney Shimmin.

11pp. Notes: Manuscript; ink. The head of the letter is annotated in pencil with a suggested date of 'Sept 1915?'. CL78.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/8
(41.28; 46.32.4) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [June 1916]

Description: Manuscript and typescript transcription of a letter written from a reserve trench in France. Gurney tells Mrs Voynich of the Welsh soldiers with whom they have been billeted, of their talk and of songs sung by them, of which he gives extracts, of their thoughts on the French and of the army life, 'awful [...] for an artist', consisting of 'boredom or hell in the trenches'.

5pp. +4pp. Notes: Manuscript; pencil and Typescript carbon copy with some corrections in ink. A suggested date of '?June 1916' is annotated in pencil at the head and verso of last page of the letter. The typescript suggests June or early July 1916. CL90.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/9
(41.29) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [June 1916]

Description: He begins with talk of Voynich's ill health, before moving on to talk of books and life under heavy fire, which 'racket' would have tried 'even Walt Whitman'. He writes that he tries to get news from the French papers, and hopes for an end to the war either in its conclusion or through his getting 'a nice Blighty'. In a postscript he asks what Elgar's setting of Binyon's 'For the Fallen' is like.

4pp. Notes: Manuscript; pencil. An annotation in ink at the end of the letter suggest a date of '?Early summer 1916'. CL92.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/10
(46.32.3) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich August 28 1916

Description: Written on Gurney's 26th birthday, when Gurney is at a clearing station having his teeth 'attended to'. He writes of the French and 'la belle France'. He reports having by chance met his best friend [F.W. Harvey] one morning, on which day he later went missing.

Harvey passed to Gurney a copy of Bridges's anthology, *The Spirit of Man*, the contents of which he thinks could have been better, although it has some good stuff in it. He sends a poem, 'Rondel'; first line: Nor flame nor steel has any power on me'.

8pp. Notes: Manuscript; pencil. CL120.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/11

(41.36) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [September 16 1916]

Description: Gurney is glad Voynich likes the poem sent in the previous letter. He tells her about his setting of 'By a Bierside', and likens Gloucester to the 'city in the soul', like Troy in Masfield's poem.

4pp. Notes: Manuscript; pencil. A pencil annotation at the head of the letter suggests a date of '?Sept 1916' and is initialled at end by a censor. The letter includes two short, as yet unidentified musical extracts. CL125.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/12

(46.32.2) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [December 1916]

Description: A letter written shortly before Christmas, which begins by thanking Voynich for a parcel of sweets. He writes, 'My letters now are all soliloquies; I can offer nothing better: a cuckoo, cuckoo with a very minor third, from sodden woodlands hopeless of the spring', living in a 'gray waste of time, in a gray wasteful business and in gray discouraged days without sunshine.' Gurney tells of having had a long talk with a man who knew Tolstoi, and likens himself to a character in 'War and Peace'.

4pp. Notes: Manuscript; pencil. CL142.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/13

(41.61) Letter from Gurney to Ethel Voynich [February 1917]

Description: A letter that includes all but the first stanza of the poem (here untitled) 'Time and the Soldier'. He writes of Voynich's work and success with some envy, it seems, and also tells a little of the place he is stationed at present.

2pp. Notes: Manuscript; pencil. Annotated at head with a suggested date of of '?Feb 1917'. CL161.

Item D10500/1/C/1/8/14

(46.31) Letter from Ethel Voynich to Marion Scott October 23 1936

Description: Voynich writes to Scott enclosing two letters to her from Gurney [/10 and /12 above?]. She also gives news of her own musical endeavours.

2pp. +env. Notes: Manuscript; ink.