

THE IVOR GURNEY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 55

February 2014

The Society's Spring Weekend, May 3/4 2014 at St Andrew's Church Centre, Churchdown, Glos GL3 2JT

Programme and booking form enclosed with your newsletter

The programme this year includes Kelsey Thornton on Gurney's *Hospital Pictures*, followed by Dick and Lisa Robinson on the diaries of a First World War nurse, Sister Edith Appleton. There will be a recital of Ivor Gurney's songs and poems featuring Philip Lancaster (baritone) and Ben Lamb (piano). The Sunday morning 'Gurney walk' will take place in Framilode.

(Also note the Gloucestershire Choral Society's Concert taking place in the cathedral at 7pm on Saturday 3 May)

Booking form with this newsletter, or contact John Philips, *General Secretary* and *Treasurer*: E-mail johnl.hay@googlemail.com Tel 01432 363103

Sunday 4 May- The Sunday Morning Walk will take place at Framilode – 'A Blowy Severn-tided Place' (from Rawling 2011 p.110).

Led by Phil Richardson.

Photograph shows the cottage once lived in by the lock keeper, Gurney's boyhood friend and mentor. Gurney's boat, 'The Dorothy' was kept here.



Society Matters

AGM

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Ivor Gurney Society will be held on Saturday 3rd May at 12 noon at the St Andrew's Church Centre, Station Road, Churchdown, Gloucestershire. Nominations for election to the Committee, and resolutions for consideration should be with the Secretary by Monday 28th April (address below).

Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 2014-15 are due by 1 April 2014. These can either be paid through PayPal <http://ivorgurney.org.uk/join.htm> or send a cheque to the Treasurer, John Phillips, (address below). For acknowledgement, please include your email address. Individual £14; Joint £18; Individual retired £10; Joint retired £12.50; student £5.00; overseas £20.

The Society Needs Your Help

Wanted! Members willing to undertake small tasks to assist in the running of the Society. Without this, the Society may cease to function. In particular, help is required in maintaining the Society's website, and in assisting the Secretary and Treasurer – ideally an Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer. None of these tasks would be particularly onerous and each can be performed by telephone or email contact. It would also entitle the volunteers to attend our twice-yearly Committee meetings if they so wished.

Please contact the Secretary, John Phillips: johnl.hay@gmail.com or 103 The Rose Garden, Ledbury Road, Hereford HR1 2TR

For the Fallen Concert

The Gurney Society Spring event has been planned to fit in with Gloucester Choral Society's '*For the Fallen*' Concert taking place at 7pm on the 3rd May. The concert programme will include Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*, Elgar's *The Spirit of England*, and Richard Shephard's *There Was Such Beauty* which sets words by Ivor Gurney and FW Harvey.

There Was Such Beauty by *Richard Shephard (b. 1949)*

Scored for soprano, baritone, narrator, chorus and orchestra, *There was Such Beauty* was commissioned by The King's School, Gloucester and first performed in Gloucester Cathedral in 1991 as part of celebrations to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the re-foundation of the school. When writing the piece, composer Richard Shephard had in mind the spacious acoustics of Gloucester Cathedral. The text comprises poems by Ivor Gurney and F.W. Harvey selected by Anthony Boden, who writes:

'This work, in three parts, reflects (i) peace before war, (ii) war, and (iii) a return to peace in a changed world. In the years before the First World War the two poets were close friends—young men enjoying innocent pleasures, creating beauty, and inspired by their beloved Gloucestershire. War fractured that innocence. Both men survived to return to peace but, unable to cast off the spectre of war, to carry invisible wounds.'

Piet Chielens of the 'In Flanders Fields' Museum in Ypres reports:

For next Autumn 2014, we (the 'In Flanders Fields' Museum), are preparing together with the museum of psychiatry in Gent (Museum Dr.Guislain) a double exhibition on the medical services in the First World War in Flanders. We will look at the organization at the front, and at the physical trauma. They will investigate the psychological trauma, and shell shock, and its evolution from 1914 to 2014. I propose to include Ivor Gurney as one of several figures linking the two exhibitions. Having been wounded near St.Julien, evacuated, treated in a CCS in the area, and then sent back to Blighty, and diagnosed much later with "deferred shell shock", he seems to fit the themes. This also allows us to pay some more attention to him.

Finally, for September 2016 we have plans for a temporary exhibition about the War in Writing - literature, but also personal documents, diaries, letters, reports, journalism. Ivor Gurney is one of the 20 figures we would really like to present and we will be talking more to the Ivor Gurney Society about this.

The Dursley School-Master

If he taught children, as 'tis said
And with vast patience earned a board and bed,
How must the Severn Plain have entered in
His walking thoughts when school door was in pin.
Vast Egypt with her sandy spaces lay
Circont by Malvern and Wales up to the Hay,
And Nilus brought the elvers up on flood
(Framilode sent a many; they were good.)
Plain country talk all salted of the soil,
And Shallow, and young Hotspur (won the mile
In May day races) Perdita, Viola; avoided;
With folk against one Coriolanus crowded
And all the clowns, with all the jests of men,
Feste, Touchstone, Bottom, Edgar and Lancelot,
Their lucky phrases stuck, and not forgot,
The hardship brought the best of them to pen.
O dreams! O bright ambition, how was that?
Fulfil where Dursley Hill falls to the flat:
Was it not easier to trust to memories
In London town, with court and stage to please.

(Ivor Gurney, '80 Poems or So')

Comments on the Dursley School-Master From Donald Hurndall Smith

This poem, included as the 59th poem in the collection entitled *80 Poems or So* (Walter and Thornton, 1997) is one of the strangest in the collection. It is based on the supposition that Shakespeare acted as a schoolmaster in Dursley for a time in his 'lost years', that period between the time he left school in Stratford, perhaps from 1579 or 1580, and his marriage to Anne Hathaway in late 1582, or possibly after the birth of his children and his appearance as an actor in London in 1592. Many years ago Dursley was suggested as a possible venue and Ivor Gurney clearly picked up the idea, if only from the seventeenth century diarist John Aubrey's contention that the bard

at some time was a schoolmaster 'in the country': the location was not specified, but that has not stopped speculation over the years. The current location favoured is in Lancashire, following the work of E.A.J.Honigmann (*Shakespeare; the Lost Years*, 1985 reprinted 2013) but I have been trying to find out why Dursley was preferred at one time. I am currently preparing an article for The Dursley Lantern, if only to present the Gurney poem to its readers.

That Shakespeare knew the area can be shown from some Gloucestershire references but that is different from showing that he actually taught in the area, and we have no idea who might have employed him. The only suggestion made by the editors of *80 Poems or So* is a reference to R.P.Beckinsale's book, *Companion into Gloucestershire* (1948): 'Local writers...have done their best to show that Shakespeare stayed here for a short while.' Beckinsale's first edition was in 1938, after Gurney's time, and he does nothing else to substantiate the claim apart from mentioning a possible relative in the next century. It is difficult to be sure which local writers are meant by Beckinsale and which gave Gurney the idea. Now that the contents of Gurney's Library are becoming known it would be fascinating to see if Gurney got the idea from Blunt or Madden, for instance. John Henry Blunt wrote his book on Dursley and its Neighbourhood in 1877, and the work by Dodgson Hamilton Madden on *The Diary of Master William Silence*, a remarkable study of Shakespeare's knowledge of field sports, appeared in 1907 (now reprinted 2012), so it is possible Gurney had seen these books. Can any Society members help further to resolve these queries?

There is little evidence that Gurney knew Dursley well himself, but perhaps some readers who have read his diaries could refute that, as we know he walked or cycled in many parts of Gloucestershire. The only other poem in which he names Dursley, so far as I can see, is the evocative poem entitled 'Yesterday Lost'(p 79 in Kavanagh 2004) which names the geographical limits of the area he knew best 'between Bredon and Dursley'. In Eleanor Rawling's recent book on *Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire* (Rawling, 2011) there are some quotations we could use to define the parts of Gloucestershire the poet knew and loved best, and she has allowed me to quote some

lines from a recent private correspondence which is specifically on this point. "If you stand on Barrow Hill above Ashleworth, one of Gurney's favourite small hills, you can see the 'long blue line' of the Cotswold edge. As Gurney says in 'Above Ashleworth' (p 38 in Kavanagh's edition),

'the Cotswolds stand out Eastward as if never
A curve of them the hand of Time might change;
Beauty sleeps most confidently for ever.'

To the north, since the line of the Cotswolds is slightly obscured by Bredon Hill, it is Bredon, an outlier of the main edge, that stands out most strikingly. To the south it is Cam Long Down and, mistily behind it, Stinchcombe Hill, that meet your gaze. Dursley of course is in the hollow between Stinchcombe Hill and Cam Long Down. So this is Gurney's way of saying - this is the landscape of my Gloucestershire that I look at daily and that inspires me, stretching all the way from south (Dursley area) to north (Bredon and Winchcombe area).

The poem, 'The Dursley Schoolmaster', is not particularly specific geographically. Apart from mention of 'the Severn plain' and 'Dursley Hill', the only place mentioned is Framilode, hardly near Dursley. Framilode is the spot on the Severn where Gurney kept his boat with James Harris the lock-keeper.



Dursley Market Place where Stinchcombe Hill 'falls to the flat'

The poem is based on the idea that some of the bard's best loved characters were formed on memories of the time when he lived near the Severn, perhaps when he taught somewhere in the area of Dursley and could escape for a time when the school door was closed. The poem has some strange words and lines. For example:

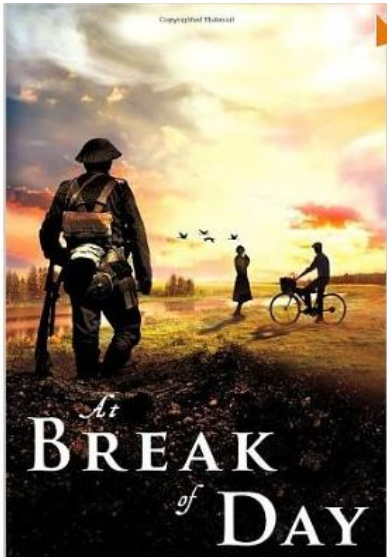
- 'circont' (l. 6); an invented word, not in the OED, meaning 'surrounded' or 'circled', presumably (of Latin origin), but how was Egypt with her sandy places 'circont' by Malvern and Wales up to the Hay?

- 'when school door was in pin' (line 4); what does that mean? Eleanor Rawling suggests a possible meaning is 'when the door was closed or pinned down' i.e. school was shut for the day or for a weekend or holiday allowing Shakespeare to roam more widely. She suggests the phrase is still used in prisons, 'pin-down' being when the inmates are locked in their cells or pinned down. I find this idea very attractive.

- the poem ends with the line 'was it not easier to trust for memories in London town...' (lines 19-20) but it is not clear what the contrast is here. What specifically was he to fulfil ..'where Dursley Hill falls to the flat'? Is he implying that disappointment followed, that ambition fell flat? This might be something Gurney felt about himself but it is odd when linked to Shakespeare. Again, Eleanor Rawling has a suggestion – perhaps Gurney was saying that Shakespeare's task of writing plays back in London was surely made much easier because he had memories of his stay in Gloucestershire to draw on for inspiration. 'Where Dursley hill falls to the flat' refers, she thinks, "to the act of coming down the escarpment edge to the flatter land below -both in fact but also perhaps as a way of talking about returning from the Cotswolds to flat London."
(points taken from private correspondence).

Any other help readers can give in understanding this poem would be of interest. Certainly the weaving together of Shakespeare allusions and references to aspects of the Cotswolds is something we can see in other poems in the collection, such as 'By Severn' (Rawling 2011) and has been well touched on by a recent critic as part of the English tradition (Hooker 1982).

At Break of Day



(image from Amazon)

Ian Venables draws readers' attention to this book:

Elizabeth Speller's new novel, 'At Break of Day' is a brilliant and compelling novel and one that is partly based upon two organ scholars at Gloucester Cathedral in Brewer's day. In fact, Ivor Novello is mentioned by name, and maybe the character of Benedict is loosely based upon Ivor?

Online review by Nathan Tompkins

<http://culturefly.co.uk/at-break-of-day-elizabeth-speller-review/>

accessed 1 Feb 2014

At Break of Day, the latest novel by Speller (her previous works including the appraised *The Return of Captain John Emmett*, once a *Richard & Judy* special) is a devastating tale of the life-altering impacts that war can inflict upon its beckoned soldiers.

One will quickly recognise that *At Break of Day* doesn't quite resemble the many traditional takes on the semi-fictional War concept when it comes to modern literature. Before delving too far into its turns of narrative it becomes noticeable that a structure of the unconventional kind is at play here: arguably as the story revolves around the developments of four servicemen and their separate encounters there was bound to be pressure on Speller to arrange its contents in a manner that allowed each to flow simultaneously, and without

ever cluttering the feast for its reader. We have, then, a layout that predominantly spends its time switching back and forth from one lead to another, utilising the break of chapter to split the focus.

This not only makes for more digestible reading, but grants each story time to properly work its way to the next end.

Readers can expect to be pushed to the cliff's edge and snatched back again on more than a few occasions with *At Break of Day*, a thrill that owes so much to Speller's fluid and gripping storytelling. But whilst so graphic, nothing ever feels sugar-coated or verbose. One advantage that the setting of war provides for Speller is the lack of necessity to dress any fictional part of the plot too thickly. The First World War

being an event that actually took place and consumed the high volume of human lives echoed in the book is enough of a prerequisite for extraordinary plot-building alone.

Speller is prone, however, to injecting a number of creative moments into the mix, especially throughout the majority of the 25th chapter where, after a few small exchanges earlier in the book, all of our four lead's lives finally cross through just one story. More than that, this particular intersection could be seen to merely represent the telling of a much bigger point-of-view: that no matter the nationality, the age or the profession, every soldier – every man – is in it together, battling the very same fear and darkness that comes with the overwhelming reality of war.



BBC Programming for the Centenary of the Great War

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2013/world-war-one-centenary.html>

BBC Radio Gloucestershire, 28 February 2014 (Chris Baxter Show 10.15am)

As part of a series of short programmes about key Gloucestershire people and the county's experiences in and contribution to the war, BBC Radio Gloucestershire will present a piece about Ivor Gurney. Chris Baxter walks and talks with Eleanor Rawling in some of the places that were important in Gurney's life, poetry extracts are read and Johnny Coppin performs some of his song settings of Gurney's poems

BBC West (Regional TV) 28 February 2014 (Points West, 6.30pm)

Points West, the BBC West TV programme of news and comment at 6.30pm, will feature a short item on Ivor Gurney, including some poetry readings, and a short interview with Eleanor Rawling all against the backdrop of Gloucestershire landscapes and the Gloucestershire archives.

BBC4 Summer 2014

Ivor Gurney; the poet who loved the war

(Date of showing not yet finalised)

*Readers will recall from the last Gurney Society Newsletter that members of the Society have been involved in assisting with the production of this documentary for BBC4. Clive Flowers, Director of the production company **Other Roads**, wrote an article for the October 2013 newsletter.*

On February 5, 2014 – **a preview of the documentary took place in Churchdown, Gloucestershire.** Members of the Society were present for this special showing. All agreed that the film was beautifully presented and gave a clear and refreshingly upbeat account of Gurney's life and creative genius.

(Below is the text taken from the BBC website)

When the Great War broke out, poet Ivor Gurney's life changed utterly – for the better. Making use of a cache of newly discovered poems, this film tells the remarkable story of the writer with the fastest growing reputation of the entire Western Front soldier-poet generation. Ivor Gurney was a war poet like no other – he didn't conform to the usual stereotypes. Gurney was not an officer but a private – and wrote from the point of view of the ordinary front line soldier. He was an accomplished composer, which lent his poetry an entirely distinctive tone of voice. He loved the discipline of war and the routines helped him cope with an undiagnosed psychological disorder. He wrote with real feeling and understanding for the Germans

– and his own music drew heavily on the Lieder tradition. And, most unusual of all, he often presented the war from a comic perspective.

Gurney thrived at the Front. Having suffered manic-depressive bouts from his youth, he enlisted in 1915 and a marked improvement in his wellbeing followed. His motivation on signing up had been to swap ‘nervous exhaustion’ for ‘healthy fatigue’ and he succeeded: the discipline of military life, with its fixed schedules, regular meals and camaraderie ensured Gurney was happier during the war than before. However, after the war Gurney struggled to adapt to civilian life. He suffered a breakdown and was confined to Dartford asylum until his death in 1937. But he carried on writing poetry – prolifically. Until now these poems have remained unpublished and largely unread, gathering dust in the archives. But in WWI’s centenary year, these poems appear for the first time as presenter Tim Kendall, the critic behind their rediscovery, brings Gurney’s unique poetic voice, with its singular perspective on the Western Front, to the wider public it deserves. (BBC Productions - 1x60 minutes).

BBC Radio 3

Ivor Gurney will be BBC Radio 3's featured **Composer of the Week between 23rd and 27th June 2014**. (text below from BBC website)

BBC Radio 3 presents a week of programmes on Ivor Gurney, the musician and poet of great promise whose life was blighted by his military service, from which he never fully recovered, spending much of his remaining few years in mental asylums. Gloucester-born Gurney has perhaps never achieved the widespread fame of the best-known war poets – and this centenary is an opportunity to celebrate and reassess his words and music. Gurney said of his creative efforts: ‘Despairing work is the noblest refuge against other despairs.’ In *Composer Of The Week*, Donald Macleod dedicates a week of programmes to Gurney, including specially recorded unpublished material from the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Drama On 3 will be broadcasting **A Soldier And A Maker**, Iain Burnside’s musical drama about Gurney’s life based on his poems, letters and songs.
BBC Productions / Perfectly Normal Productions (Drama On 3).

BBC Two

Writers of the Somme (date not yet finalised)

This one-off documentary for BBC Two tells the story of the battle through the experiences and words of the poets and writers who took part. Using animation, readings and contributions from historians, poets, biographers and descendants, *Writers Of The Somme* shows how their writing was inspired by specific locations and events, ultimately changing the way people think about war itself. (60 mins)

Gurney Society Notecards, featuring Gloucestershire scenes.

Still available: Ivor Gurney Society Notecards featuring Gloucestershire scenes. 8 different cards designed and produced by Eleanor Rawling. Each card is 4" x 6" and presents a high quality colour photograph of a landscape with special meaning for Ivor Gurney and a poetry extract. Blank space for your own message. Envelopes provided. See example photos (tho' actual cards are colour) and extracts below. **To buy now**, contact Eleanor Rawling, specify which packs you want (Cotswold or Severn valley) and send a cheque made out to The Ivor Gurney Society for the correct amount to 8 Mill Paddock, Abingdon, OX14 5EU. EleRawling@aol.com

Website purchase available shortly <http://ivorgurney.org.uk/shop.htm>

One pack of 4 cards showing Cotswold Edge scenes £6.00 inc. p&p;

One pack of 4 cards showing Severn Valley scenes £6.00 incl. p&p

Two packs cost £12.00 (incl. p&p)



War need not cut down trees, three
hundred miles over Seas
Children of those the Romans saw –
lovely trunk and great-sail trees.
(‘Possessions’ by Ivor Gurney)



Who says ‘Gloucester’ sees a tall
Fair fashioned shape of stone arise,
That changes with the changing skies
From Joy to gloom funereal,
Then quick again to joy;

(‘The Old City’ by Ivor Gurney)

Forthcoming Events and Society Activities



St Mary de Lode Church, Gloucester

Gloucester Music Society, February 27 2014

St Mary de Lode Church, Gloucester

Walking into Clarity is the premiere of a musical fantasy on Ivor Gurney written by Rene Samson. It will take place in the church on Thursday 27 February. Baritone, Mattijs van de Woerd, and pianist, Shuann Chai, will perform this tribute to the life and work of Ivor Gurney.

<http://www.onlythewanderer.com/>

<http://www.gloucestermusicsociety.org.uk/>

Vaughan Williams Society, March 7 2014

Cheltenham Town Hall Concert, Hallé Orchestra,
Andrew Manze conductor, Francesco Piemontesi piano
Including Vaughan Williams, *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* ; Beethoven *Overture, Leonore No. 3*; Mozart *Piano Concerto No. 21 K.467*; Sibelius *Symphony No. 7*

Tickets Hotline: 0844 576 2210

<http://www.rvwsociety.com/concerts.html>

Cheltenham Poetry Festival 2014, 28 March to 6 April

Last year, the most successful event of all in a very successful Festival was *Severn to Somme*, a showing of the moving film by Diana Taylor and Anthea

Page and readings of poems about Gurney by local poets. Although there will be no specifically Gurney events this year, those who love his work should find much else to attract them, in particular perhaps celebrations on 29 March of the centenary of the births of Dylan Thomas and Laurie Lee and a talk on 6 April about the Dymock Poets with readings of their work. The full programme will be available in early February at <http://www.cheltenhampoetryfest.co.uk/>.

The Dymock Poets Saturday 22 March

Spring Event at May Hill Village Hall, May Hill, Longhope GL17 ONP, including a May Hill walk and readings (2 hours), reflections on 'Green' approaches to reading Edward Thomas's poetry, and a talk about the *New Numbers* magazine in which the poetry of many Dymock poets appeared. <http://www.dymockpoets.org.uk>

April 6 - A talk about the The Dymock Poets by Jeff Cooper at Cheltenham Poetry Festival (see above)

The Edward Thomas Fellowship, 21 June 2014, Study Day

This study day, to be held in Oxford, will examine a variety of themes connected with the life and work of Edward Thomas. Speakers include Hugh Thomson on ancient trackways, Judy Kendall on Edward Thomas and birdsong, and Jean Moorcroft-Wilson on her forthcoming biography. More details will be posted on the website <http://www.edward-thomas-fellowship.org.uk/news.html>

The Housman Society, <http://www.housman-society.co.uk>

Saturday 26th April 2014 1.30pm Shropshire War Poets

Methodist Church, King Street, Much Wenlock TF13 6BL
Marking the centenary of the start of WWI, Gladys Mary Coles interweaves the lives of A.E. Housman, Wilfred Owen and Mary Webb with their war poetry. Much Wenlock Poetry Festival

Wednesday 28 May 2014, 5.30pm

Hay Festival of Literature

The Housman Lecture *The Name and Nature of Poetry* by David Edgar With illustrations ranging from Shakespeare to Sheridan, from Caryl Churchill and Howard Brenton to Oscar Wilde and Brian Friel, playwright David Edgar explores the poetry of plays.

Monday, 16 June 2014. 7.30pm St Laurence's, Ludlow

Stephen Varcoe, accompanied by Christina Lawrie, the celebrated baritone commemorates the centenary of the Great War with a programme of song featuring Housman settings by Butterworth, Bax, Somervell, Moeran and Armstrong Gibbs and settings of Rupert Brooke and Siegfried Sassoon by Moeran, Gurney, Britten and Grainger. Booking through Arts@St Laurence, The Parish Office, 2 College Street, Ludlow SY8 1AN. Further information from admin@janeallsopp.co.uk

Chatham House commemoration of the First World War

Ivor Gurney: Soldier, Poet and Composer

12 June 2014, 7.30pm, St James's, Piccadilly

A concert programme of songs and poetry to mark the anniversary of the First World War by focusing on one overlooked figure - the poet and composer Ivor Gurney. The programme dramatizes Gurney's life as musician, soldier and eventually asylum patient, following his progress in his own words, with humour and poignancy. The performance moves seamlessly between the spoken word (Alex Jennings) and song (with tenor Andrew Kennedy, accompanied by Iain Burnside). The concert features both Gurney's own songs, and specially commissioned settings of Gurney's poems by award-winning composer Tim Watts. A pre-concert talk will be given by Dr Kate Kennedy, Ivor Gurney's biographer.

Alliance of Literary Societies, 31 May-1 June 2014

The 2014 AGM weekend of the Alliance of Literary Societies is being hosted by the Marlowe Society in Canterbury, 31 May – 1 June. The venue is the King's

School and it will be a weekend of walks and talks (including 'The work and genius of Christopher Marlowe', by Richard Wilson, the Peter Hall Professor of Shakespeare Studies at Kingston University), with a shortened re-enactment of Dr Faustus. There is a small registration fee (covering refreshments, talks, etc.), and lunch/dinner is chargeable. It would be really good to see someone from the IGS there. For more information see <http://www.allianceofliterarysocieties.org.uk>

The Three Choirs Festival 2014, Worcester 26 July-2 August

2014 marks the 287th meeting of the three choirs of Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester (taking into account the break during two world wars), and the 299th year since the birth of the festival in 1715. The opening three days start with a Requiem and finish with Resurrection – Britten and Mahler framing a miniature festival in themselves! The main evening cathedral concerts are fully supported by a wealth of daytime performances, recitals, lectures and events.

The sincerity and majesty of Elgar's music is brought to the Three Choirs audience in 2014 in *The Spirit of England* and *The Apostles*.

The centenary of the outbreak of WW1 is a theme throughout the festival. The joint commissioning with Chemnitz Opera of *A Foreign Field* by Torsten Rasch is a memorial which moves beyond reconciliation towards an openness and sharing of memories, bringing together singers from the Three Choirs with those from Chemnitz. Inspired by words of the Dymock poets The work will be repeated by Chemnitz Opera together with members of our choirs, in 2015.

Extract from website: **Dr Peter Nardone**, Artistic Director

F W Harvey Society

<http://www.fwharveysociety.co.uk/Society%20Events.htm>

'A Gloucestershire Lad at Home and Abroad' 27 June 2014

A concert and recital featuring Forest of Dean Brass (Director Chris Howley) in the Gloucester Cathedral at 7.30pm. The concert will feature the Cathedral Youth Choir and narrations of F.W. Harvey's moving verse by Vernon Harwood BBC, Canon Celia Thomson, Eric Freeman and Dame Janet Trotter DBE. The Band will play a wide selection of pieces, including Nimrod, Walking With Heroes and A Gloucestershire Lad. (Sponsored by Watts Group of Lydney).

'Will Harvey's War' 30 July- 2 August, 7.45pm

The Everyman Theatre will stage 'Will Harvey's War', an adaptation of a long lost semi-autobiographical novel. The Everyman's professional company of actors will appear alongside local performers and musicians to create this epic tale of Gloucestershire, the battle of the Somme and a final attempt at escape through the countryside of Westphalia. This production marks the launch of "Gloucestershire Remembers World War 1" – a programme presented by the Everyman Theatre, The Wilson Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum, The History Press, Gloucestershire Archives and the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum. Heritage Lottery Funding.

Will Harvey's Real War: A Pre-Performance Talk 1 August 6.30pm

The Chair of the F W Harvey Society, Roger Deeks will give an overview of the War experienced by F.W. Harvey and introduce Grant Repshire, the F.W. Harvey Researcher from the University of Exeter and Gloucestershire Archives. Grant will discuss the differences between the semi-autobiographical novel dramatized by Paul Milton for the Everyman Theatre and the lived experience of the soldier poet. There will be a short discussion and opportunities for questions before closing. Refreshments will be available.

Finzi Friends 2015

29 – 31 May 2015 Ludlow - English Song Weekend The Ludlow English Song Weekend is being established as our most prestigious event and consequently it has been decided to increase the frequency to every two years instead of three. This date has now been fixed and venues booked but naturally, the programme is still in development. An eclectic mix of composers, compositions, artists and performances as usual.

2015 – Joint Ivor Gurney Event The Finzi Friends are keen to undertake a joint event with the Ivor Gurney Society because of the natural close relationship Finzi had with the music and poetry of Ivor Gurney. Finzi very quickly recognised the worth of Gurney's output and ensured it was brought to public notice. An event is proposed for 2015, possibly at Chosen Hill, the inspiration for 'In Terra Pax' and significant for Gurney too. Details of the day and calendar dates have still to be finalised.

<http://www.finzifriends.org.uk/events.htm>

Glyn Maxwell's review of Ivor Gurney's "To His Love"
From Paris Review, November 11 2013,

In the last century, a few years of sodden slaughter in France and Flanders turned British poetry from Keatsian lyricism to raw, aghast reportage. Isaac Rosenberg's poems, for instance, moved from prewar patriotic exultation—"Flash, mailed seraphim, / Your burning spears"—to, three years later, this numb, bone-dry mutter from the trenches: "Droll rat, they would shoot you if they knew / Your cosmopolitan sympathies."

In Ivor Gurney's "To His Love" you see the thing happening not in mid-career but in mid-poem—between lines, in a line break, specifically the last one. It's the most astonishing line break I've ever encountered. It's the sound of a culture's poetic history cracking in half.

Cover him, cover him soon!
And with thick-set
Masses of memoried flowers—
Hide that red wet
Thing I must somehow forget.

"To His Love" begins as an almost doggedly traditional elegy, with the Byronic echo of "We'll walk no more on Cotswold." It meanders through rivers, beasts, flowers, and the old tropes—nobility, "pride," "memoried." We are lulled into thinking that the urgency of "Cover him, cover him soon!" arises from intense soldierly love, rather than the desperate need to hide a shredded corpse, that "red, wet / Thing." The euphemistic Latinate décor is stripped away; the haplessly tall *T* does its pitiful duty by the form, like a Tommy too shell-shocked to hide, a standing target. The fragile Gurney was gassed and traumatized by the war, and he lived out his days in asylums. I never forget this poem of never forgetting:

<http://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2013/11/11/glyn-maxwell-on-to-his-love/>

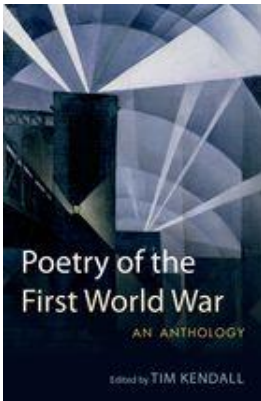
Poetry of the First World War; An Anthology

Oxford University Press

Edited by Tim Kendall, October 2013

<http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780199581443.do>

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Tim Kendall has taught at the universities of Oxford, Newcastle, and Bristol before becoming Professor and Head of English at the University of Exeter. His publications include *Modern English War Poetry* (OUP, 2006), and *The Oxford Handbook of British and Irish War Poetry* (ed.) (OUP, 2007), and he is writing the VSI on *War Poetry* (forthcoming, 2014). He is also co-editor of the *Complete Literary Works of Ivor Gurney*, (forthcoming, OUP).

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The Ivor Gurney Society Journal



As well as the Society newsletter, which we aim to issue to society members bi-annually, the Gurney Society publishes an annual journal, affectionately known as 'The Gurnal', which contains scholarly articles on Gurney's work and closely related items, and book and CD reviews. This is sent to all Society members as part of their subscription, but Gurnals can also be purchased by non-members.

An index of the Society Journal and a list of journal contents are both available on the website.

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