

# THE IVOR GURNEY SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 58

October 2015

### Ivor Gurney's Father

David Gurney died on 10 May 1919. He had undergone several operations and suffered a lot of pain during the previous year, much to the distress of Ivor. "I left my father in pain hoping for his end... May it come soon!" (Letter to Marion Scott, 22 April 1919)



MR. DAVID GURNEY,  
Tailor, of 19 Barton-street,  
Gloucester, who died on  
Saturday, May 10, aged 57  
years, after a long and pain-  
ful illness of 18 months. He  
had carried on a tailoring  
business for 25 years in  
Barton-street.

**Item from Gloucestershire  
Chronicle and Graphic 1919  
(c 2015 Neela Mann)**

My father looked on ploughland  
and willed me.

His was the friendliness of every hill  
and tree

In all the west Gloucestershire, in all  
west Gloucestershire

Born of that earth, of like love  
brought to birth;

Knowing the flights of birds, and the  
song of the smallest

Bird – the names of flowers, and  
the likeliest place

Where first spring might bring Her  
lovely trifles in.

So on a night when Orion ruled with  
majestic light,

He remembered his past dreams, all  
broken, and hoped for grace

Whereby a son should say what he  
had never, never,

Been able to say or sing of such  
beloved earth.

(St Petersburg, 1925)

# **Society Matters**

## **AGM 2016**

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Ivor Gurney Society will be held on Saturday 7 May 2016 at 12 noon at the St Andrew's Church Centre, Station Road, Churchdown, Glos.

## **Subscriptions**

Subscriptions for 2015-16 are due by 1 April 2016. These can be paid through PayPal <http://ivorgurney.org.uk/join.htm> or send a cheque to the Treasurer. For acknowledgement, include your email address. Individual £14; Joint £18; Individual retired £10; Joint retired £12.50; student £5.00; overseas £25. Please note the increase in the overseas subscription, necessitated by the decision to continue sending paper copies of the newsletter

## **Newsletter**

As a result of feedback from the membership, paper copies of the newsletter will still be sent by post to overseas members. The subscription rate will rise to £25 to cover postage costs.

## **Website News**

The Ivor Gurney Society website <http://ivorgurney.org.uk/> has been refreshed and is again full of up-to-date information. The Resources area now allows downloads of music scores (Scores Downloads) as well as containing Biography and Bibliography sections.

We hope to keep the News and Events section as up-to-date as possible. Members wishing to publicise a Gurney-related event should contact the Newsletter editor or the Secretary (see page 22 for e-mail addresses). Personal contact details for Society officers will no longer appear.

## **Spring Weekend 2016, 7-8 May 2016**

The Ivor Gurney Society's Spring Weekend 2016 will be in Churchdown as usual and is a joint event with the Finzi Society. More information to follow.

## **Ivor Gurney: Poems of War (ed RK Thornton)**

This is still available (£5) . Contact Kelsey Thornton at 2 Rectory Terrace, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 1XY [rkrthornton@btinternet.com](mailto:rkrthornton@btinternet.com)

## **Chairman's Report**

(from the minutes of the AGM 9 May 2015)

The chairman reported that, since the previous AGM, the Gurney window had been dedicated at Gloucester Cathedral, that Ivor Gurney had been a BBC "Composer of the Week" and had featured in one of the BBC Proms. He drew attention to the Society's publications particularly the Newsletter and the Journal as well as "Ivor Gurney - Poems of War" which had been edited by Kelsey Thornton. He thanked both Eleanor Rawling for her work on the Newsletter and Kelsey Thornton for the "Gurnal".

The chairman announced that, after 20 issues, Kelsey had decided to "retire". He was presented with a gift as a token of appreciation for his work. The chairman also presented a gift to John Phillips who had acted as secretary, treasurer and, on occasions, chairman since the society began.

The Chairman also referred to Philip Lancaster's decision to resign from the committee and regretted that the committee would lose his valuable input.

Since the last AGM, the Chairman had taken a new post which had taken up a huge amount of his time and energy, thus restricting his availability over Gurney Society matters. Nonetheless, plans were being made for the next Society Weekend which would involve a joint meeting with the Finzi Society.

## **Kelsey Thornton and The Ivor Gurney Society Journal**

The Ivor Gurney Society Journal (fondly known as The Gurnal) published its last edition under the editorship of Kelsey Thornton in 2014. Kelsey has been joint editor with George Walter (late 1990s) then editor of the journal from its inception, unfailingly producing a high quality journal, meticulously edited and containing wide-ranging and scholarly content. As a new member in 2007, I was impressed by this journal which bears comparison with the best professional journals in its production and content. Like many a reader, I have also been amazed and inspired by Kelsey's wonderful cover drawings that appear each year. He is a man of many talents.

A very big thank-you from the Society to Kelsey for all his hard work and creativity over the past 20 volumes. We wish his successor, April Frederick, well in her role as the new editor of the Ivor Gurney Society Journal.

**Treasurer's Report;  
Summary of income & expenditure for 2014 – 2015**

Bank balance brought forward on 1 April 2014	<b>£1707.75</b>
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**INCOME**

Subscriptions & donations	2822.66
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Sales of Notecards, books, etc	107.50
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<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£2930.16</b>
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**EXPENDITURE**

Society Journal	
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Production	982.50
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Distribution	137.61
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Sub-total	1120.11
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Newsletters (2)	
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Production	231.75
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Distribution	731.22
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Sub-total	962.97
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Society Gurney Day - May 2014	534.00
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Office stationery and postage	64.45
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<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£2681.53</b>
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Net surplus/deficit	<b>£248.63</b>
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Bank balance as at 31 March 2015 & carried forward to 2015/16	<b><u>£2223.84</u></b>
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Colin J. Brookes (Treasurer), April 2015

## PJ Kavanagh Remembered

P J Kavanagh, President of the Ivor Gurney Society since its foundation, died on 26 August 2015. Kavanagh was best known as a poet, writer and journalist. He edited *Ivor Gurney: Selected Poems* (OUP 1990) and *Ivor Gurney: Collected Poems* (Carcanet 2004). The Society is greatly saddened by his death. We reprint below an article from Kavanagh's publisher Michael Schmidt, Carcanet, courtesy of Guardian News and Media Ltd. It was originally published on 5 September 2015 in the Guardian Review.

*As a young man, PJ (Patrick Joseph Gregory) Kavanagh, who died this week, went to Ireland and sought out the celebrated poet of The Great Hunger Patrick Kavanagh. Finding his bibulous namesake in a hostel, he introduced himself. The old poet said: "Why don't you change your feckin' name," and settled back to his gloomy pint.*

*PJ's father, Ted Kavanagh, wrote comedy, notably for wartime radio, It's That Man Again (ITMA). When Ted was around, the house resounded with the clack and ping of the typewriter. "He lived by writing jokes and had a sort of quasi-rebellious attitude to society as anybody who makes fun of things does." PJ did not live by jokes, though he could be hilarious company.*

*PJ addressed me as his "Dear Sedate Publisher" because I published not only his poetry but his essays and seemed untroubled by the rate-of-sale. Born in 1931 and raised in London during the war, he had seen a lot of the world and suffered significant early loves and bereavements. The latter (particularly the sudden, early loss of his first wife Sally to polio, recounted in his classic memoir *The Perfect Stranger* in 1966) "must relate one to other people – rather than separate one from them". He was a soldier (Korea, wounded), a disaffected student at Merton College, Oxford, an employee of the British Council in Indonesia, a broadcaster, actor (emerging with David Frost and Willie Rushton, including in his later credits *Half Moon Street* with Michael Caine and *Sigourney Weaver*, and the part of a Nazi priest in an episode of *Father Ted*), a memoirist, poet, essayist and critic, a nature writer rooted in his beloved Gloucestershire but able to see beyond its borders, an anthologist and editor.*

*He knew the value of what he wrote and that, like the quiet, formal, questing work of Edward Thomas and Ivor Gurney (which he edited and revived), it*

would find a place. Life taught him that irony inheres in how the world treats us, what it gives and snatches back: it is an aspect of his themes, not of his style. This and his Catholicism set him apart from his ironical contemporaries, though Philip Larkin might almost have agreed that "Every response to a poet, or more specifically to a poem, is in a sense autobiographical. The work appeals to, or coincides with, some part of our own nature, or perhaps to some deficiency of ours, of which we are aware, and it supplies some lack."

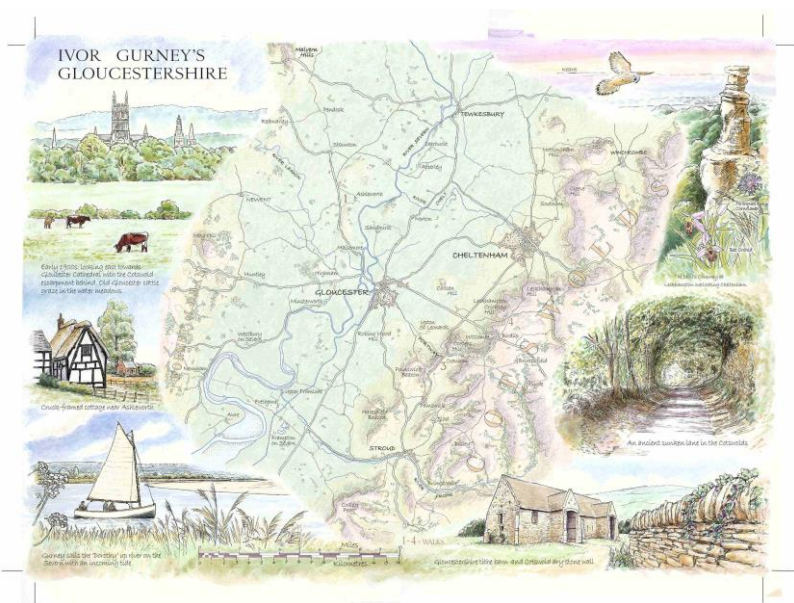
He did not like to be called a nature poet. In the poem "Nature Poet" he speaks of himself in the third person: "He liked all the people he could and, more than is normal, / Cherished his dead, thought often of them, because they were still." He detects mercy, "Wafting, as though remembered." This is religious elegy of a high order, having more in common with George Herbert and Gerard Manley Hopkins than John Clare and William Wordsworth. Kavanagh wrote of "a sense of two worlds: of us living simultaneously not just in this world, but in another too". He tells transcendent truths without the fibbing one can get in Yeats. In "Resistance" (watch the commas) he evokes

*A bridge of punctuation angels use  
To balance on, when, soft as feathers  
Stroking our dismay, they tell their weird,  
Without complacence, grief-including jokes,  
And sigh, at our resistance.*

PJ followed Patrick Kavanagh's advice and changed, or abbreviated his name. He found his own ground, his own great hunger, and in a tentative faith rooted in particulars, a way of transcendence. There is an old cat in a late poem who is about to die. He imagines her going to his dead beloved in the other world, moving against her legs. "

*Warm and dry it alights, almost  
weightlessly, and  
as light and as dry as this trusting  
bird on my finger  
the weight of your hand curved  
round the back of my hand  
I suddenly remember.*

## Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire – Poster Maps



These map posters are archival quality colour prints suitable for framing, produced on fine art paper. **Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire** is the map featuring in Eleanor Rawling's book of the same name (2011). It was produced by drawing on Gurney's poetry and writings. Order size of map required from Eleanor Rawling, 8 Mill Paddock, Abingdon, OX14 5EU enclosing a cheque made out to Eleanor Rawling for correct amount.

Size of Map	Cost with cardboard map roll if collected in person	Cost if posted to you
12 x16 inches	£18	£24
18 x 24 inches	£24	£30
24x 32 inches	£36	£48

## **Report of Spring 2015 Weekend visit to Dryhill Farm**

On May 10, members of the Ivor Gurney Society met at Dryhill Farm for a morning visit, kindly hosted by Nigel Rowley, the current owner of Dryhill Farm.

“This is just the place would please you’ Ivor Gurney wrote to Marion Scott on 22 April 1919. ‘An old gray-stone rambling building under a Roman camp near the site of a Roman villa where many things have from time to time been discovered. A place of thorn, oak, ash, elm, clear streams, a 500 feet-up place where one gets a sight of Severn sea, May Hill, and on clear days of the Welsh Hills, by looking out of a window or wandering out of a gate. Here I am set to learn farm business, to become sane and glad for life, with many books, Beethoven, Bach, Mozart, Tristan and the Magelone Lieder.” (Gurney letter, April 1921)



**Dryhill Farm with the new vineyard in front (Photo; N Rowley)**



After coffee, Eleanor Rawling gave a brief introduction and some poetry readings, Nigel Rowley welcomed the Society to the farm and spoke about its history. He then guided members in groups on a tour of the house.

Nigel explained that Dryhill was established around 1650 and is a Cotswold Stone property, originally thought to be a resting place for those using the nearby drovers' road (the Greenway) on their journey, with their animals to Cotswold markets. The older part of the farmhouse dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and included a stone dairy and a vaulted cellar with the stones believed to have been taken from the nearby Dryhill Roman Villa. The site originally comprised a collection of agricultural buildings, stables and a dairy, with nearby pastures for sheep and cattle on the sloping scarp slope to the east. The field in front of the main house is believed to have been a terraced Roman vineyard. Today a new vineyard is being created.

The farm was extended during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ivor Gurney is known to have lived and worked on the farm in 1919. Indeed, Society members were taken to see one of the upper attic bedrooms which is said to be 'the poet's room'.

Philip Lancaster recently drew attention to a letter published in the Gloucester Citizen newspaper, Wednesday 29 August 1973, found amidst some of Leonard Clark's papers. It was from Mrs Helen Herring: the then 9-year-old daughter of the farmer of Dryhill Farm, where Gurney worked and stayed in the spring of 1919. Her recollections were read out to the group:

"I remember so well the first cup of tea in the kitchen and my mother trying to get him to talk. But all he would do was to look out on to the wash house roof and go into raptures over the moss and broken tiles. My father swept out, remarking, 'A rum chap to help farming'."

Other Society members including Sarah Blowen and Anthony Boden made contributions about the farmhouse and Gurney's music. John Rawling made some watercolour sketches of the farm.



**Sketch of Dryhill Farm by John Rawling**

After the tour of Dryhill, members were led on a short walk to visit Dryhill Roman Villa. This was a 'villa rustica' ("countryside villa") - the term used by the ancient Romans to denote a villa set in the open countryside, often as the hub of a large agricultural estate. Dryhill is located on a broad terrace near the foot of the escarpment and very close to a spring. It was excavated in 1849, following discovery during ploughing, and was found to consist of 12 rooms. There was a hypocaust but no tessellated pavement. The plan suggested a pillared entrance. The villa is said to have been destroyed by fire.

After viewing the villa site, Society members continued their walk to the west along the foot of the escarpment. Their attention was drawn to the steep scarp slope frequently mentioned by Gurney. Today the Cotswold Way follows the scarp edge, leading high above Dryhill Farm past a Neolithic Long Barrow, known as Crippetts. Members stopped to admire the views across the Severn vale and the imposing Crickley Hill, beloved by Ivor Gurney.

Crickley is one of the places most referred to in Gurney's poetry. He was fascinated by the landscape, the underlying geology, the atmosphere of a high windswept common and the history of the area. Crickley is the site of the

Battle of Crickley Hill which archaeologists believe was one of the first battles known about on British soil taking place there between rival tribes in around 3,600BC. Crickley is also the site of a Neolithic settlement and an Iron Age hill fort built around 700BC and in occupation until about 450BC. There was probably a Roman guard camp here as well. Gurney's poetry makes frequent references to the history of the site, imagining both settlers and soldiers on the high hilltop. Gurney's orchestral music *Gloucestershire Rhapsody*, written in 1921, is rooted in the Gloucestershire landscape and seems to allude to 'the great curve' of Crickley Hill and to marching Roman soldiers.

Nestling in a leafy lane below Crickley is a farm cottage, originally owned by Dryhill Farm. Eleanor Rawling believes this is the cottage in which Gurney took up residence during 1920 (Rawling, 2011). Many of his poems refer directly to Crickley and to Dryhill Farm.

### **Crickley Cliffs (extract)**

Crickley cliffs blared a trumpet ever, ever golden,  
A flourish of trumpets against the late afternoon light.  
Rome spoke out intangibly, yet matchlessly,  
And defied land and high air with boy-soldiers might.  
Such huge tramlings of brass sound about  
Cliffs of white stone.....the kite floated there, and also there  
Rabbits ran clumsily about the warrens unnumbered there.  
To have a mind of music, a body of delight,  
And Crickley cliffs to stare at before returning,  
Is at least a touch of glory – and for man to be right.

### **Up There (extract)**

On Cotswold edge there is a field and that  
Grows thick with corn and speedwell and the mat  
Of thistles, of the tall kind; Rome lived there,  
Some hurt centurion got his grant or tenure,  
Built farm with fowl and pigsties and wood-piles,

## High Wycombe to Dryhill Farm

### Some thoughts from Phil Richardson

#### Introduction

One morning in February, 1920 Ivor Gurney left High Wycombe intent on getting back to Dryhill Farm. His precise route is not recorded but a number of clues are available. The following account may provoke some further debate on the subject.

Ivor's presence in High Wycombe stems back to the Autumn of 1914. He had joined the Royal College of Music in 1911 and, in spite of a number of periods of depression, had continued his studies, much encouraged by Marion Scott.

At the outbreak of war in August 1914, Ivor had volunteered but was rejected. Soon afterwards, possibly aided by Marion Scott, he became organist at Christ Church, High Wycombe travelling there from London at weekends. He was soon befriended by Edward Chapman, the churchwarden at Christ Church. Edward and Matilda Chapman and their children accepted Ivor into their home with great affection. His correspondence with them during the war is recorded in *Stars in a Dark Night* by Anthony Boden (1).

Having eventually been accepted into the 2nd/5th battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment Ivor survived in spite of injury and gassing to the end of the conflict in November 1918.

In the Autumn of 1919, Ivor Gurney had rejoined the Royal School of Music but had found living in London not to his taste. He thus took up residence near the Chapman family in High Wycombe. However, this was to be only a temporary situation.

#### The Walk

Matilda Chapman showed her concern for Ivor's health and wrote to Marion Scott on 25 February 1920 saying that he had "left for Gloucester on foot the previous day" (2). Herbert Howells, having met up with Ivor after his journey, wrote to Marion Scott on Sunday, 29 February also expressing his concern about Ivor Gurney's state of mind. (2) Included in the letter is the following:

“(Ivor Gurney) walked last Tuesday from High Wycombe to a **village 8 miles east of Oxford**; continued on Wednesday to that city; and took a train from there to a place on the Cotswold ridge (I have forgotten the name of the village) and walked across the hills to Dryhill Farm, Crickley.” (3)

Thus his walk from High Wycombe started on Tuesday, 24 February 1920.

In *Ivor Gurney’s Gloucestershire*, Eleanor Rawling suggests the poem “The Little Way”, even though written in 1925, may allude to this journey (4)

“At eight o’clock, I had left my friends with appearances  
Of walking just so far – taking tram and later  
Train;”

Eleanor also surmises that the “place near Oxford” might be Thame. However, Thame is 13 miles from Oxford.

In her book *Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott*, Pamela Blevins suggests that the “village east of Oxford” could be Tiddington (2). Tiddington is almost 10 miles from Oxford on the A418.

Thame, Tiddington and Wheatley had stations on the Great Western Railway branch line which ran between Princes Risborough and Oxford. Princes Risborough is on the main line from Paddington to Birmingham which passes through High Wycombe. As the Chapman residence was at St Michael’s, Castle Hill, High Wycombe (now The Greenway) and just a stone’s throw from the station Ivor could have reached Oxford by train. But he chose to walk!

Ivor was used to walking so the 20 miles from High Wycombe towards Oxford would not have worried him. Later he would walk from London back to Gloucester sleeping in barns along the way. He even managed to get from Gloucester to Newport when he had thought of joining a ship.

The most obvious route from High Wycombe to Oxford, even in 1920, would be via the (old) A40 dropping down from the Chilterns after Stokenchurch. Wheatley, which is about 20 miles from High Wycombe and east of Oxford, is on the (old) A40 but is only about 6 miles from the centre of Oxford.

To avoid using the trunk road Gurney may have set off through Lane End and, after passing through the villages of Fingest and Turville, reached Christmas Common on the edge of The Chilterns. He would then have dropped down to Watlington and walked via Stadhampton (B480) to nearby Chiselhampton which is south-east of Oxford at a distance of about 8 miles from the city centre. The distance from High Wycombe to Chiselhampton using this route is also about 20 miles. Chiselhampton has The Coach and Horses Inn which dates from the 16th century and was thus a possible overnight stop.

### **The Train Journey**

After a night's rest, the walk into Oxford would have been fairly leisurely. At Oxford he boarded a train.

The GWR line from Oxford ran north-westwards to Kingham and thence through Adlestrop ("Yes, I remember ...") towards Worcester. At Kingham the line had two branches: to the east towards Banbury and to the west towards Cheltenham. Having changed trains at Kingham the route passed close to Stow-on-the-Wold and through Bourton on the Water and he may have alighted at Andoversford which is "on the Cotswold ridge". Andoversford is the nearest stop to give an easy route to Crickley though the name is less likely to have been forgotten by Howells.

The Banbury and Cheltenham Direct Railway had built rail links between Banbury and Cheltenham in stages with Kingham as the main junction. The link from Kingham to Bourton on the Water had opened in 1862 and from Bourton on the Water to Cheltenham in 1881.

Andoversford, in spite of its small size at the time, had a large market and thus had a lot of freight traffic. In 1891 the M& SW J R opened a line from Cirencester joining the GWR track just east of Andoversford station. However, their trains were not allowed to stop so a new station was opened originally named "Dowdeswell" but later "Andoversford and Dowdeswell". In 1904, GWR relented and so M& SW JR trains stopped at both stations. After 1926, "Andoversford" became "Andoversford Junction" but both stations and the lines fell under the Beeching axe in the 1960s.

Consultation of various Bradshaw's Guides shows that the times of trains from Kingham towards Cheltenham were fairly consistent in the period 1919 to 1922. Times for trains from Oxford with a stop at Kingham varied rather more but were quite frequent.

	Jan 1920		May 1920	
<b>Oxford</b>	<b>d 12.00</b>		<b>11.42</b>	<b>3.30</b>
<b>Kingham</b>	<b>a 12.45</b>		<b>12.31</b>	<b>4.23</b>
	<b>d 1.15</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>1.15</b>	<b>4.45</b>
<b>Andoversford</b>	<b>a 2.00</b>	<b>5.30</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>5.30</b>
<b>Cheltenham</b>	<b>a 2.20</b>	<b>5.50</b>	<b>2.20</b>	<b>5.50</b>
<b>Dryhill Farm</b>				

The poem "The Little Way" includes the statement "At eleven o'clock, I was lost ..." (4).

As it was February it would have been dark by early afternoon. There are a number of tracks and minor roads leading from Andoversford westwards towards Seven Springs and on towards Crickley and thence to Dryhill Farm. But trying to follow the Cotswold edge at night would have been difficult and, at times, hazardous. It would have been easy to have become disoriented. Nowadays part of his route is the clearly marked "Cotswold Way". This does indeed lead to Leckhampton Hill on which stands the Devil's Chimney.

"On and on, I knew not where, till the unknown  
Majesty of Leckhampton rose Roman as shield-shape known," (4)

From there to Dryhill Farm would have been a familiar route. The distance from Andoversford to Dryhill Farm using the Cotswold Way is about 7 miles but it is clear he tramped much further.

“The Little Way” concludes:

“To the spinney I had come  
Where at last in the thick night unstarred  
Gave gloom alone. Where I halted and lay; choosing as always  
Tobacco for a friend, but stifled the gaudy match blaze  
Hurting the dusk - lay smoked, thought of books and the  
companies  
Of Roman here had travelled, rested, or blundered through  
brambles  
(The camp and little most treasured farm so near.) (4)

## References

- (1) Boden, Anthony (1986) *Stars in a Dark Night*, Sutton Publishing, Stroud
- (2) Blevins, Pamela (2008) *Ivor Gurney and Margaret Scott*, The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, p. 184
- (3) Hurd, Michael (2008) *The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney*, Faber and Faber, London, p. 139
- (4) Rawling, Eleanor M. (2011) *Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire*, The History Press, Stroud, p. 62

## Gurney Society Notecards

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. Envelopes provided. 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). Specify which packs you want and send a cheque made out to The Ivor Gurney Society for the correct amount to:



Eleanor Rawling, 8 Mill  
Paddock, Abingdon, OX14 5EU.  
[EleRawling@aol.com](mailto:EleRawling@aol.com)



## **Forthcoming Events and Society Activities**

### **Friends of Dymock Poets**

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7:30 pm, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 2:00 pm. *Strange Ghost* ; A new opera to mark the centenary of the death of Rupert Brooke *David Earl, composer* Festival Theatre, Cambridge Buddhist Centre, Newmarket Road, Cambridge CB5 8DT

Marking the centenary of the death of the iconic English poet Rupert Brooke, *Strange Ghost* is a new two-act opera by David Earl composed to a commissioned libretto by author and playwright Juliet Jenkin. Led by baritone James Schouten as Brooke, the cast will be accompanied by a 24-piece chamber orchestra conducted by Dominic Peckham. The director is Dionysios Kyropoulos. Tickets can be bought from the ADC Theatre. For more information, please see the *Strange Ghost* website at [www.rupertbrookeopera.com](http://www.rupertbrookeopera.com).

### **Edward Thomas Fellowship**

Trip to Agny: Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017

To mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Edward Thomas's death, the Fellowship, in partnership with Eyewitness Tours, is organising a visit to the First-World-War battlefields in France and Belgium. The final price is subject to negotiation and currency fluctuation but should be around £420 per place. All enquiries about the visit should be directed to Ian Morton [ianandbreeda@btinternet.com](mailto:ianandbreeda@btinternet.com)

Also see [www.edward-thomas-fellowship.org.uk](http://www.edward-thomas-fellowship.org.uk)

### **Gloucester Music Society**

On Saturday 27 February 2016 3pm, we are pleased to welcome for the first time the cappella ensemble Octavo which presents a celebration of English landscape, language and love, weaving together consummate depictions of all three from Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Britten, Delius, Finzi, Ireland and Holst.

For further information <http://www.gloucestermusicsociety.org.uk/>

## The English Music Festival and EM Records

**1. Gurney Cello Sonata: new release** Ivor Gurney's and Cyril Scott's Cello Sonatas star in the latest EM Records release of world première recordings, alongside atmospheric and beautiful works for cello and piano by Ian Venables. The disc (EMR CD031), which was released at a hugely successful and well-attended launch at the Elgar Birthplace Museum, features Richard Jenkinson and Benjamin Frith, and is now publicly available. Please visit [www.em-records.com/discs/emr-cd031-details.html](http://www.em-records.com/discs/emr-cd031-details.html) for audio extracts, full information, and to purchase.

**2. Parry Film** A film overviewing the life and work of Charles Hubert Hastings Parry and exploring his works for violin and piano has just been released by EM Records. The 16-minute documentary was filmed, with the kind permission of the Hon. Laura Ponsonby and Kate and Ian Russell, in the beautiful and atmospheric surroundings of Shulbrede Priory in West Sussex, a 12<sup>th</sup>-century building that belonged to Parry's son-in-law, Arthur Ponsonby, and which Parry himself visited frequently. The film's main purpose is to raise awareness of Parry's chamber music and, in particular, his works for violin and piano, which EM Records plans to record shortly and for which project we are currently fundraising. See <http://www.em-records.com/>

## The Song of the Severn

Ian Venables new CD was released over the summer 2015 on the Signum label. It features two of his most recent song cycles, *The Song of the Severn* and *The Pine Boughs Past Music* performed by the baritone Roderick Williams together with the Carducci String Quartet and pianist Graham Lloyd. It has had reviews in *The Gramophone* and *The Guardian*.

## Severn and Somme film

Severn and Somme will be shown in the Chapter House Gloucester Cathedral, 7-30pm on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2016. The evening will include some of Gurney's songs sung by Philip Lancaster and accompanied by Adrian Partington on the piano. Bar refreshments. All tickets £10. Advance tickets available to Ivor Gurney members.(limited number of tickets).

Please send a cheque (with your email address on the back of the cheque) for £10 payable to Redcliffe Films with a stamped self-addressed envelope to Anthea Page, Redcliffe Films, 1 Mill Avenue, Bristol BS1 4AJ

Copies of the Severn and Somme DVD are available for purchase on the website [www.redcliffefilms](http://www.redcliffefilms) at a cost of £10 each plus £3.00 postage and packaging and we also give talks and show the film to local history groups for a modest fee.

## **Sam and Ivor**

10 November 2015; A revised version of the 'Sam and Ivor' performance which Phil Sutcliffe and Kelsey Thornton gave at the Gurney Society Spring event in May 2015 is being put on at the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society in Westgate Road, as a free performance at 7 p.m. The date on the eve of Armistice Day seemed right for material which records participation in the First World War and celebrates its end.

## **Severnside Composers Alliance (SCA)**

Thursday 19 November 7.30pm St. Paul's Church, Clifton Bristol

Following her highly successful recital for the SCA last May, leading soprano Charlotte Newstead returns to St. Paul's Church for another performance of songs by seven leading West-country composers. Leading composer, Geoffrey Poole joins Charlotte Newstead as accompanist in a performance of his entertaining settings of poems by the celebrated American poet Wallace Stevens. Formerly Professor of Music at Bristol University, **Poole** now lives near Stroud and has been an active member of SCA since 2011. Charlotte Newstead's recital also includes the first performance of brand new songs by Bristol-based composer Steven Kings as well songs by six other SCA members. SCA gratefully acknowledges financial support from the Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust and the Paragon Music Trust.

# The Ivor Gurney Society

[www.ivorgurney.org.uk](http://www.ivorgurney.org.uk)

The Ivor Gurney Trust ([www.ivorgurneytrust.com](http://www.ivorgurneytrust.com))

## ***Patrons of the Society:***

Sir Andrew Motion

Ian Partridge CBE

Sarah Connolly CBE

**President:** Group Captain Anthony Boden    **Vice-President:** Adrian Partington

## **Membership rates (UK) (all rates per annum):**

Individuals £14; Joint £18; Students £5; Retired £10 single; £12.50 joint;  
Institutional £12.50; International see website.

## **International membership:**

You can join the Society by contacting the Treasurer at the address below  
or online at [www.ivorgurney.org.uk](http://www.ivorgurney.org.uk) via PayPal.



## **The Ivor Gurney Society Journal**

As well as the biannual Society newsletter, the Gurney Society publishes an annual journal, known as 'The Gurnal' which contains scholarly articles on Gurney's work and related items, incl. book and CD reviews. This is sent to all Society members and is for sale to non-members (see website).

## ***Current officers:***

**Chair:** Rolf Jordan [chair@ivorgurney.org.uk](mailto:chair@ivorgurney.org.uk)

**Secretary:** Philip Richardson [secretary@ivorgurney.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ivorgurney.org.uk)

**Treasurer:** Colin Brookes [treasurer@ivorgurney.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@ivorgurney.org.uk)

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