THE IVOR GURNEY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 62 October 2017

Spring Weekend 2018, 12 and 13 May

The Spring Weekend will take place on the weekend of 12 and 13 May, 2018 in the new location of the Ivor Gurney Hall, King's School, Gloucester. The Ivor Gurney Hall was the King's School's 19th century schoolroom, written about by Gurney who was a pupil at the school. The hall was extensively restored in 2015 to bring out the glory of its arch-braced roof in a striking multi-coloured style. Saturday's event will include talks, a song recital and chamber music by Ivor Gurney performed by the acclaimed young Australian baritone, Michael Lampard, accompanied by the chamber ensemble 'Divertimento'.

Photo published in Cotswold Life May 2016
(you will have to imagine the colour here!)

Society Matters

The Website

The address of the Society's website is now www.ivorgurney.co.uk As ever, it is full of up-to-date information about Gurney, items for sale and notification of news and events. The Resources area allows downloads of music scores (Scores Downloads) and also contains Biography and Bibliography sections. Note that it will soon be possible to purchase more CDs, new notecards and other shop items on the website, so keep checking what is available.

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 Chair or the Secretary (see back page for e-mail addresses).

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are valid for a year from first payment date and can be paid through PayPal www.ivorgurney.co.uk or send a cheque to Ian Venables, 2 Turrall St. Barbourne, Worcester WR3 8AJ. For acknowledgement, include your email address. Individual £14; Joint £18; Individual retired £10; Joint retired £12.50; student £5.00; individual overseas £25 (for all general enquiries and current rates, contact Membership Secretary or see website membership@ivorgurney.co.uk).

Ivor Gurney: Poems of War (ed RKR Thornton)

This is still available (£5.00). Contact Kelsey Thornton at 2 Rectory Terrace, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 1XY. rkrthornton@btinternet.com

Ivor Gurney Trust

http://www.ivorgurneytrust.com/

The Trust's primary purpose is to preserve and promote Ivor Gurney's literary and musical legacy. The website provides details of the Trust's history, its mission and its work. It also contains advice and information about public performances of Ivor Gurney's work. Gurney's vocal motet, *'Since I believe in God the Father'* has been published by the Ivor Gurney Trust (July 2017) and is on sale through the Society's website.

Chairman's Report, June 2017

Various changes have occurred to the Society's committee. At last year's AGM Rolf Jordan announced his intention to step down as Chairman and move across to take on the role of the Society's Secretary. As a temporary measure, I agreed to become acting Chairman. We also welcomed Sebastian Field onto the committee. Since then, however, there have been further changes. With the sad death of John Phillips last September the Society lost one of its greatest advocates. He was one of the founder members of the Society and for over 20 years he was a prominent member of the committee. He made a significant contribution to the running of the Society and his death has left some large gaps in the work of the committee that will have to be dealt with, either by reassigning various jobs or by appointing additional members.

So, I would like to take this opportunity to appeal once again to Society members for some help with the work. In particular, we are looking for a new Membership Secretary (now filled by Sebastian Field) and someone who might be willing to help our Editors with the biannual Newsletter distribution and the yearly Journal posting. These jobs are not onerous but they are nevertheless essential to the running of the Society. Lastly, I would like thank all the members of the current committee for their continued work and support over the past year. It is most reassuring to have such a committed and experienced team who continue to give up their valuable time to the various committee tasks.

In particular, I would like to pay a special thanks to Eleanor Rawling who produces the Society's Newsletter. Eleanor devotes a great deal of time and energy to collecting and editing material for publication. The newsletters are attractively presented and are always full of interesting and informative articles. The Society's annual Journal is now edited by April Fredrick. This flagship publication continues to be the benchmark for other literary societies and, since April took over the role from Kelsey Thornton, she has continued to develop this important publication. In her editorial introduction to last's years Journal April wrote, *"The 20 year-old editing shoes of R.K.R Thornton are indeed large ones to fill. One of the greatest legacies was to create a journal about Ivor Gurney which is a forum for open debate and conversation"*. The 2015 edition has certainly lived up to this and I would like to thank April for

her outstanding work and scholarship. The journal ran to 121 pages and contained some ground-breaking articles, including a newly discovered archive between a hitherto unknown correspondent and friend of Gurney – Charles Lionel Briggs. His grandson, David Briggs presented a fascinating portrait of Lionel's life, and Kelsey Thornton provided the context from a contemporary perspective based upon the archive material recently donated to the RCM.

One of the most important aspects of the work of the committee is the development of the Society's website, which is becoming increasingly important not only as an informational and marketing tool but also as a major source of revenue, via the shop and online subscriptions. This year the committee appointed Mr John Elkington as the website manager. In this capacity he has made significant improvements to the general look of the website and to its functioning. A technical issue has meant that we have had to change our address and this has necessitated other adjustments, including the updating of our stationery and general society literature. The new address is www.ivorgurney.co.uk and it is a marvellous online resource and an essential window on the work of the Society.

Last year's Spring Event was held here at St Andrew's Church Centre and there was a good-sized audience in attendance. The event focused on the First World War with an excellent talk given by John Greening and Margi Blunden - the daughter of the poet Edmund Blunden. John Greening based his talk on his newly published book by OUP on the life of Edmund Blunden, entitled, *'Undertones of War',* while Margi Blunden read and commented upon some of the extracts that were used. The afternoon ended with a memorable recital given by violinist Midori Komachi and pianist Simon Callaghan, and featured the premiere of an unpublished violin and piano work by Gurney. The weekend was rounded off with the ever-popular 'Gurney Poetry Walk' led by Eleanor Rawling. This hugely enjoyable walk began at Cranham Woods and ended up with a late lunch at the Black Horse Inn in Cranham. I would like to take this opportunity of thank Eleanor for organising these wonderful walks.

On the literary front, new publications include, Nicola Harrison's *'A Wordsmith's Guide to English Song; Poetry and Imagination Vol 2. The Song of Ivor Gurney'* published by Compton Publishing. Gurney also featured in a series of articles on First World War composers in the Military History Monthly

Magazine written by music scholar Tim Rayborn. There is also a new drama presentation compiled and written by Jan Carey called *Author, Composer, Soldier of a Sort - A celebration of the friendship between Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott told through his songs, poems and correspondence*. Finally, Cecil Woolf Publishing has just issued a new study by Phil Carradice of Ivor Gurney in their extensive War Poets series. It is entitled *Ivor Gurney, Poet of the Trenches & the Gloucestershire Countryside.*

Musically speaking, this year has been a hugely productive one. I can report that Gurney's vocal motet *Since I believe in God the Father* will be published by the Ivor Gurney Trust next month and will be on sale through the Society's website. The motet has also been recorded and released on the Coro label by 'The Sixteen'. The CD entitled *Music in Poetry* features choral music spanning four centuries. Other CD releases include the premiere recording of Gurney's piano miniatures, *Five Western Watercolours*, performed by Duncan Honeybourne now available on the EM Records label. The acclaimed vocal ensemble Tenebrae are also recording the motet for release on CD later this year. This recording will feature a selection of Gurney's orchestral songs sung by Sarah Connolly. A new Chandos CD album of *British Orchestral Tone Poems* has just been released. This collection includes one of the finest performances (in my opinion) of Gurney's major orchestral work , *A Gloucestershire Rhapsody*. Last summer also saw the Australian Premiere of *A Gloucestershire Rhapsody.* This was performed by the Australian Discovery Orchestra conducted by Kevin Purcell. Another recent CD release on the EM Records label is a disc, entitled *Heraclitus* which includes the premiere of the slow movement of Gurney's 1925 D minor String Quartet that was painstakingly brought together from the parts by Dr Philip Lancaster. In February and March of this year there were two concerts organised to mark the centenary of Gurney's 1917 song *Severn Meadows*. The first concert in February took place at Cranham Church with a repeat performance in March at Twigworth Church. The performers included, the Gloucestershire choral group 'Sabrinensis and the Royal Oak Brass ensemble. Last year marked the centenary of the Battle of the Somme. Gurney was very much part of that offensive and the major Historical First World War Museum based in Peronne, France, mounted an impressive exhibition there between July and November 2016. Gurney's wartime experiences and poetry featured prominently in the exhibition and in their handsome souvenir catalogue.

This concludes this year's annual report.

Who was Ivor Gurney's 'The Silent One'?
The night attack by the 2/5th Glosters on 6-7 April 1917

By Simon Jones, Historian

This article is reprinted from the blog of Simon Jones, Historian https://simonjoneshistorian.com/ Simon attempts to discover the identity of Ivor Gurney's 'Silent One'. He would welcome comments and information from members of the Society who are knowledgeable about this poem and the events described. simon.jones87@gmail.com

In Ivor Gurney's poem about his experiences in the First World War, *The Silent One,* the musician and poet describes a failed night time attack in which a non-commissioned officer is killed and left hanging on the uncut barbed wire. With the attack held up, Gurney is politely asked by an officer to try to get through a possible gap in the wire but, with equal politeness, he declines.

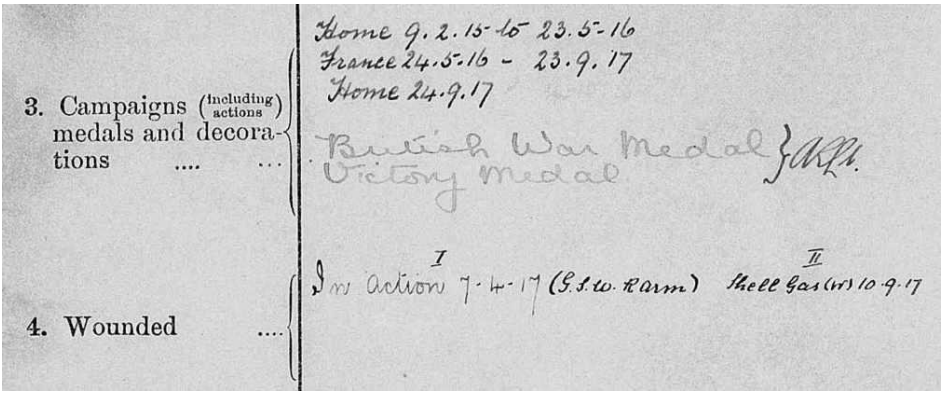
The poem has been described by his biographer as 'this most truthful report from the battlefield'.[1] Although he was writing in the 1920s, the preciseness of the details suggest that Gurney was recalling an actual event. In 2010, while I was guiding a group on a literature-themed tour of the Western Front, we visited the place where Gurney was wounded during an attack on the night of 6 - 7 April 1917 and we realised that this was clearly the event that Gurney was describing in 'The Silent One'.[2] It was one of many minor attacks made by the British as they pursued the German withdrawal from the Somme battlefield to the Hindenburg Line. Typically the Germans held positions for a few days, inflicting casualties with machine guns, before pulling back. The British attack had been planned for two days earlier only to be cancelled. Every such attack required soldiers to prepare themselves mentally for death or wounds and Gurney described his feelings to his friend Marion Scott:

My state of mind is — fed up to the eyes; fear of not living to write music for England; no fear at all of death.

He hoped a 'Nice Blighty' would come soon, by which he meant a wound serious enough to require treatment in the UK.[3] A fortnight after the attack had taken place, Gurney wrote again to Marion Scott, explaining that he was

indeed ‘wounded: but not badly; perhaps not badly enough’ for he did not have a Blighty wound but was in hospital in Rouen.

It was during an attack on Good Friday night that a bullet hit me and went clean through the right arm just underneath the shoulder…[4]


3. Campaigns (including actions) medals and decorations ....

Home 9.2.15-16 23.5.16
France 24.5.16 - 23.9.17
Home 24.9.17
British War Medal
Victory Medal

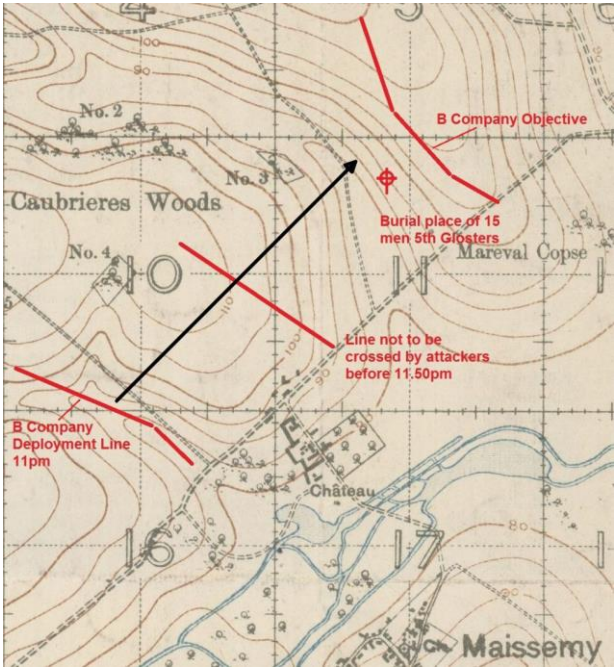
4. Wounded ....

I
In action 7.4.17 (G.S.W. R arm)
II
Shell Gas (wr) 10.9.17

Part of Ivor Gurney’s service record showing the date of his wound on 7 April 1917, the abbreviation indicating ‘gunshot wound right arm’. (National Archives WO363 via Findmypast.com).

The attack was made by two battalions of Gurney’s Brigade. On the left was the 4th Battalion Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry while on the right was Gurney’s battalion, the 2/5th Gloucestershire Regiment. The Glosters (as they were known) attacked with two companies, Gurney’s B Company was on the left and C Company on the right. The 59th Division was also supposed to attack to the left of the Ox and Bucks.

The Germans held trenches along high ground, protected in front by belts of barbed wire which were concealed from British observation by a depression. The speed of the German retreat left the British without maps of the German positions and this lack of information contributed to the failure of the attack.[5] On the night of 6 April, Good Friday, the attackers moved forward to a position about 1,000 yards from the German positions. The night was wet and very dark with no moon. Their orders were to deploy by 11pm and they will have lain down and waited for the British guns to open up. Gurney’s B Company was occupied a line about a third of a mile in width.



British Trench Map with the attack of 6-7 April 1917 marked. This map, corrected to 30 January 1917, did not show the German trenches or wire; woods are also incorrectly plotted. (Map: McMaster University Creative Commons).

At midnight, the artillery began a forty-minute bombardment of the German positions, building to an intense fire for the final five minutes. The Brigade commander afterwards stated that the British shells fell short but there were no reports of any British casualties from this cause. At 12.40am two companies from each of the two battalions rushed forward and the British guns advanced their targets by 100 yards every four minutes: this formed a 'creeping barrage' that the attackers were supposed to follow.

Lieutenant Brown, of the Ox and Bucks attacking to the left of Gurney's Company, said that his men started 'in quick time'; as they neared the German positions, they broke into a rush towards the wire and some were shouting. There were shouts heard also from the Germans and two or three were seen to climb out of their trenches and run away. But the attackers did not see the German wire until they were right on it: they found that the shelling had missed it, it was uncut, about ten yards deep and about five feet high. The Germans at once targeted their wire with machine guns and grenades, in the

darkness sparks flew where the bullets hit. Brown reported that his own light machine guns were unable to suppress the German fire; consulting with Gurney's Glosters on his right, he found that they were also held up.

Gurney's men too had found the wire uncut: Lieutenant Pakeman was reported in the Glosters' War Diary to have:

'rallied his men and made 3 efforts to get through, though himself wounded. He led his men up to the wire & cut a certain amount himself.'

Pakeman was to be awarded the Military Cross for his part in the unsuccessful attack, the citation recording that:

'He led his company in the most gallant manner and personally tried to cut gaps in the enemy's wire. Later, although wounded, he remained at his post.'

The War Diary also mentions that in C Company, Sergeant Davies 'distinguished himself cutting a gap large enough for 5 men to get through. All of whom were killed.' This man was actually Lance-Sergeant Frank Davis, awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal with the citation:

'He led his platoon in the most gallant manner, and personally tried to cut a gap in the enemy's wire. He was severely wounded.'

These attempts to get through the wire were fruitless and the two battalions withdrew to a partially sunken track to reorganise.[6] Brown again spoke to the commander of the Glosters' B Company and they decided to make another attempt to get through the wire. Taking place at about 1.30am, this also failed and they withdrew his men to the track.

The withdrawal and failed second attempt is described by Gurney's two final lines: 'retreated and came on again, Again retreated a second time, faced the screen.'

The area attacked by the Glosters. The German trenches were just beyond the crest line which is marked by trees on the right. The German wire was above and behind the area of trees in the middle ground (Cooker Quarry). The track is where the Glosters and Ox and Bucks withdrew before their second attempt to get through the wire. (photo: GoogleEarth).

Brown again conferred with the two Glosters company commanders and an officer of the 59th Division to his left: none had got through the wire and they decided to withdraw on the grounds that it appeared impossible.[7]

The 2/5th Glosters War Diary entry for 7 April 1917 (National Archives, WO95/3066) records that 15 men were killed from the battalion, and seven officers and 27 men wounded, including Lieutenant Pakeman. Six of the wounded were evacuated, one of whom will have been Gurney.[8] The bodies of the dead, originally buried near to the German wire, were moved to Vadencourt British Cemetery in 1919.[9]

A German cemetery is now on the site of the German trenches attacked by the Glosters. This view looks back across the ground over which they advanced and shows the dead ground in front of the German positions which apparently prevented the artillery from bombarding the German wire. The German resistance was part of a holding operation and when more British troops repeated the attack, on the night of the 8 – 9 April, the Germans were found to have withdrawn. A study of this short battle suggests that Gurney's recall of events was precise and accurate and that his capacity for intense self-examination provides valuable insights in respect of his admission of his

refusal to attack and the way that this was apparently accepted by his superior officer. Such disobedience of an order in the face of the enemy could have resulted in Gurney receiving the death penalty. Instead, the incident appears to illustrate the circumstances whereby, in a heavily civilianised British army, officers preferred to lead by example, rather than compelling their men to carry out a task that they themselves would not. It also suggests circumstances in which orders were a matter of negotiation where disobedience in certain situations would be accepted.

Two individuals are described in the poem. It is impossible definitely to identify the probable officer who unsuccessfully asks Gurney, with 'the politest voice – a finicking accent', whether he might find a way through but he may have been Lieutenant Pakeman, decorated for his part in the attack. In 1916, Sidney Arnold Pakeman was a history master at Marlborough College, having graduated from Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. After the war he became Professor of History at the University of Ceylon and died in London in 1975.

It is possible to offer a more confident identification for the other soldier. The poet characterises him by his Buckinghamshire accent and his non-commissioned officer's stripes:

The Silent One
Who died on the wires, and hung there, one of two –
Who for his hours of life had chattered through
Infinite lovely chatter of Bucks accent:
Yet faced unbroken wires; stepped over, and went
A noble fool, faithful to his stripes – and ended.

In April 1917 Gurney's battalion still had a strong Gloucestershire identity and, of the fifteen killed in the attack, all but four were born or enlisted in the county or in Bristol.[10] None was strictly from Buckinghamshire but one, a corporal, was born in Long Marston, Hertfordshire, in an area closely enclosed on three sides by the boundary of Buckinghamshire. It was in the *Bucks Herald* newspaper that the parents of a dairy worker, Corporal James Chappin, placed an announcement on 26 April 1917, explaining that their son, James, had been killed in the war on 6 April.

Notes.

[1] Michael Hurd, *The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney*, (Oxford, 1984), p. 203.

[2] My thanks to Mrs. Joyce Kendell for pointing out the resemblance.

[3] R. K. R. Thornton (ed.), *Ivor Gurney War Letters*, (London, 1984), pp. 152.

[4] Letter postmarked 14/4/1917, *Ivor Gurney War Letters*, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

[5] The latest map found is Sheet 62cS.E. Edition 2A Trenches, corrected to 30/1/1917. Later maps (2nd February 1918) shows a series of fire trenches on the crest and forward slope which, if German, would have been there on Good Friday 1917. The positions of small woods are shown incorrectly on the earlier maps.

[6] Brown discovered that the 59th Division on his left had not attacked and its troops were crowding into his sector. See note below.

[7] A report by 184th Brigade states that a third attempt was also held up before the withdrawal was made. 'Report on attack on German trenches on night 6/7th April, 1917'; 'Report on Operations carried out by 184th Infantry Brigade from the time of taking over from 183rd Infantry Brigade to the time of relief by 35th Division'; Lieutenant K. E. Brown, (commanding A Company, 4th Battalion Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Infantry) 'Report on attack on German trenches on 6/7th April 1917', War Diary GS 184 Infantry Brigade, National Archives WO95/3063.

[8] War Diary, 2/5 Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment, National Archives, WO95/3066.

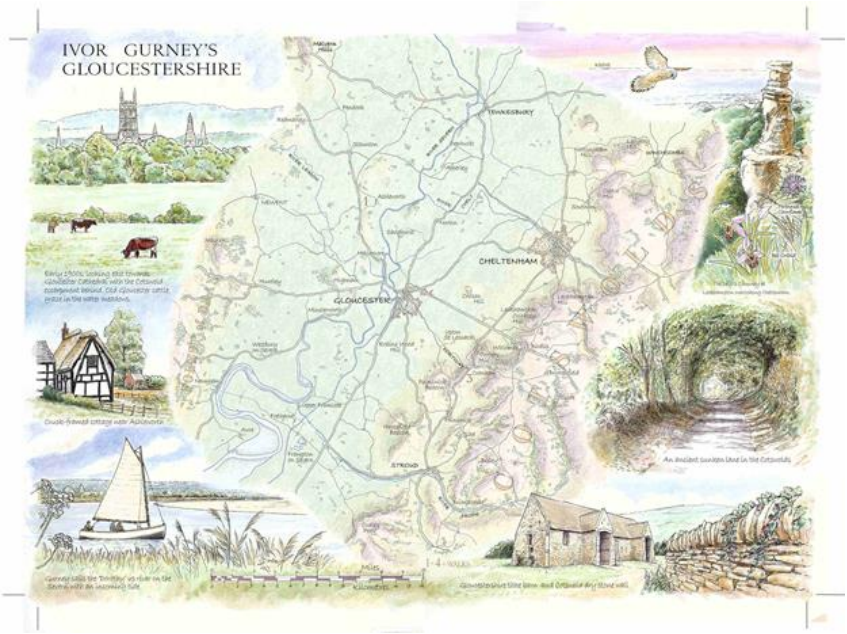
[9] CWGC Burial Return via CWGC.org.

[10] *Soldiers Died in the Great War*, (HMSO, 1921) digitised version searched via Ancestry.co.uk.

Detail of 'The Silent One' ms is from the First World War Poetry Digital Archive, accessed 3 April, 2017, http://ww1lit.nsms.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/collections/item/6942, http://ww1lit.nsms.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/collections/item/6931

Walking into Clarity; exploring Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire Poetry

A presentation was given by Eleanor Rawling at the P D James English Faculty event, 2 March 2017 at St Hilda's College, Oxford. Eleanor traced Gurney's footsteps across the Gloucestershire countryside, explaining the importance of walking to Gurney's memory, creativity and well-being. Kate Kavanagh, an alumna of the college wrote the following report:



The map of IG's Gloucestershire from Rawling, 2011**

It was a delight to meet Ivor Gurney in my -- our -- old college, St Hilda's, Oxford, as a result of Eleanor Rawling's illustrated talk **Walking into Clarity** on March 2nd. Based on her 2011 book *Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire,* she followed Gurney into the country around Gloucester which he, like Eleanor, knew so well and which he made the enduring cornerstone of his poems. "Naming names" (as P.J.K* insisted) was essential to Gurney's poetic imagination, in "his" England as in "his" wartime France, and indeed in names of other places known only from books (cf "Poems of the States"). In that almost mystical landscape, centred on the Cotswold Edge and the River

Severn, places like Cooper's Hill, Crickley, Wainlode, Ashleworth and Malvern assumed the importance of local gods. He carried them to the trenches and through wrecked France, and their presences followed him to the asylum in Kent where he endured the last years of his life.

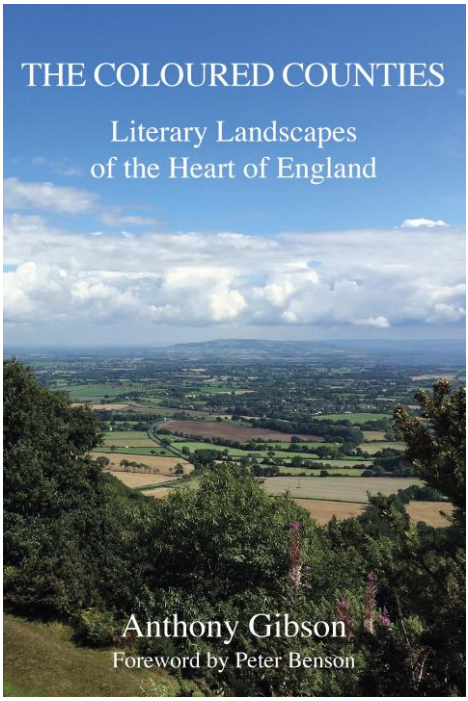
Gurney's poems were (I gathered) new to most of the students in the audience, and the topographical approach to him makes an attractive entry point to set beside his more often emphasised themes of war and his precarious mental states. He was of course virtually unknown in the 1950 s English course of my time, which covered very little after 1820. Eleanor's presentation was accompanied by the reading of selected poems by Nicolette Jones (St Hilda's English alumna and Sunday Times Children's books' editor). I was impressed by the clarity of her performance and understanding - Gurney's syntax isn't always easy. It all brought back memories of helping P. J.* with grey cardboard boxes of Gurney's poems in the Gloucestershire archives, from which efforts emerged a personality so strong we could almost hear him giving instructions. *The High Hills ... Autumn, that name ... By Severn...* and by special request a favourite, one of his last of all, *Soft Rain*, a perfect metaphor of memory.

Kate Kavanagh

*P. J. K. is P J Kavanagh to whom Kate was married. PJK was the editor of the 1982 and 2000 editions of Ivor Gurney: Collected Poems. He died in 2015 and was remembered in the newsletter of October 2015.

** Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire map is available in map poster form. These map posters are archival quality colour prints suitable for framing, produced on fine art paper. They are available in three sizes (all inches) -12x16 (£20), 18x24 (£26) and 24x 32 (£28). Order size of map required from Eleanor Rawling, 8 Mill Paddock, Abingdon, OX14 5EU enclosing a cheque made out to Eleanor Rawling, and your address. P&P is included.

The Coloured Counties by Anthony Gibson



Although I had heard of Ivor Gurney, and remembered vaguely that there was something tragic about him, that was really all I knew until I began researching the literary landscapes of Gloucestershire. Discovering the man and his poetry, and exploring the countryside which inspired and consoled him has been one of the greatest of the many joys experienced in the writing of "The Coloured Counties".

I was fortunate to have Eleanor Rawling's "Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire" as my guide. It led me to all the most important Gurney locations: the Arlingham Horseshoe, Crickley, Chosen and Coopers Hills, Hartpury and Ashleworth. The sun shone on my researches. The Severn can rarely have looked more serene and majestic than it did on the May afternoon when I walked from Arlingham to Framilode, returning by way of Wick Court and Barrow Hill, from which the view was exactly as Ivor Gurney described it in June 1913. "Oh what a place!", he wrote to his friend and confidante Marion Scott. "Blue river and golden sand and blue-black hills."

Ashleworth and the country around it is similarly unspoilt. The hawthorn was in full bloom as I climbed the 'other' Barrow Hill, which Gurney had first visited with his father, and from which he imagined himself looking south in 'Above Ashleworth'. I wrote my reflections on the experience sitting by the river in the garden of the Boat Inn, pint in hand, imagining myself as some sort of latter-day Edward Thomas!

Crickley Hill has, of course, changed since Gurney's day. It no longer provides the 'quietude' which he so valued. But it still offers a wonderful panorama of Gloucester and the Severn Vale, and is still the perfect spot to rest awhile, enjoy the views, contemplate the world around us and think of Ivor Gurney and his poetry. Those thoughts must inevitably be mixed. Yes, he was a tragic figure: a brilliant musician and uncut diamond of a poet, cut off in his prime by mental illness, forced to spend his last years in a mental hospital far from his beloved Gloucestershire.

But that must be balanced against the happiness he had known as a young man, walking through the countryside and sailing on the Severn in the 'Dorothy' with his great friends Will Harvey and Herbert Howells. Over and above that was the deep joy that he found in the countryside around his home - a joy in which we all now can share, thanks to his poetry and music.

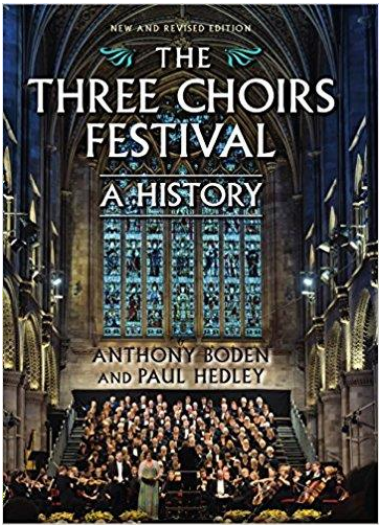
That is the essence of a 'literary landscape'. Whether it is Richard Jefferies and the Wiltshire Downs, A E Housman and Shropshire, the Dymock poets and the Leadon Vale, or any of other writers explored in "The Coloured Counties", the connection between writer and countryside enriches our experience of both. I hope that those of you who buy the book get as much enjoyment out of reading it and visiting the places as I did in researching and writing it.

The Coloured Counties ISBN 10-0956851185 is published by Fairfield Books, Bath. It was launched at an event at Bredon Village Hall on 9 October, attended by many literary and musical societies, including the Ivor Gurney Society (represented by Eleanor Rawling). The book costs £20, available from stephen.chalke@hotmail.co.uk or via website http://www.fairfieldbooks.org.uk/

The Three Choirs Festival; A History

By A Boden and P Hedley

This volume has recently been published by Boydell Press 552pp, £25 ISBN 978 1 783 27209 9



"This handsome book will appeal particularly to British music enthusiasts" Malcolm Riley writing in The Gramophone Magazine, October 2017 www.gramophone.co.uk

Described in the Radio Times (27 July 2015) as 'A remarkable, unique institution lying at the heart of British life', the Three Choirs Festival celebrated its three-hundred-year anniversary in 2015. The Festival rotates each summer between the English cathedral cities of Gloucester, Worcester and Hereford. Originally published in 1992, this revised edition brings the history of the oldest surviving non-competitive music festival in Britain thoroughly up to date. It traces the development of the Festival from its origins in the early eighteenth century to the present day. Anthony Boden is a writer with particular interests in music and literature. In 1989 he was appointed as Administrator of the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival, a post he held until his retirement in 1999. In 1995 he became the founding Chairman of the Ivor Gurney Society and he is now its Honorary President. Paul Hedley is a partner in Exart Performances, an Associate Fellow at the Saïd Business School, University of Oxford, has a PhD in theoretical linguistics, and spent five years as Chief Executive of the Three Choirs Festival.

Music and Poetry Update for 2017

Thanks to Ian Venables for much of this information.

Oxford Lieder Festival: Gurney and Britten with Peter Harris and Hamish Brown
Saturday, 14 October
The joint winners of the Oxford Lieder Young Artist Platform gave their showcase recital, featuring Ivor Gurney's moving 1919 settings of AE Housman, Ludlow and Teme, and Britten's remarkable settings of John Donne.
Venue: Holywell Music Room, Holywell Street, Oxford OX1 3SD

War Poetry, Prose and Song; A Performance,
Sunday 12 November 2017
By the Live Literature Company at the National Portrait Gallery. Features Nicholas Farrell, Dave Fishley, Seiriol Thomas and pianist Tess Uys. Devised and directed by Valerie Doulton. Tickets www.npg.org.uk/events
£8 (concessions £7) 020 730 60055

The Ivor Gurney Trust has published Gurney's motet, *'Since I believe in God'* and this is on sale through the Society's website. The motet has also been recorded and released on the Coro label by 'The Sixteen'. The CD entitled, *'Music in Poetry'* features choral music spanning four centuries.

Ian Venables reports on 'Gurney Online' –

1. Poets of World War 1 at www.warpoets.org.uk
This website has a short biography on Gurney and includes a selection of his poems. http://warpoets.org.uk/worldwar1/poets-and-poetry/ivor-gurney/

2. www.firstworldwar.com
A World War One website that has a section devoted to Ivor Gurney.

3. There is an excellent website run by Rob Weedon, dedicated to retelling the stories of the generation of classical composers who fought in World War I www.warcomposers.co.uk . The site feature news and gives the details of recent and forthcoming 1st WW commemorative concerts, including music by Ivor Gurney. The latest biography on the site is about Herbert Matheson, an organist and composer of parlour songs. He was killed at the Western Front in 1918. Other additions in the last year are Patrick Hadley, best known for the

evocative carol "I Sing of a Maiden". He lost a brother and sustained a terrible injury in World War I. His biography also includes mentions of two other composers; Boris Ord and Harold Darke, both also known for their wonderful carols which feature every year in 'Nine Lessons and Carols' services. Performing editions of long-out-of-print works by Francis Purcell Warren have been added, together with a photograph of this young composer who died at the Somme.

4. The War Composers blog, attached to the above site, features notes and queries on a few WWI composers about whom details are obscure, as well as a look at WWII composers. www.warcomposers.co.uk

5. Simon Jones Historian – An excellent article "Who was Ivor Gurney's 'The Silent One'? The night attack by the 2/5th Glosters on 6-7 April 1917" www.simonjoneshistorian.com (reprinted in this newsletter/ed.)

6. See again Professor Tim Kendall's brilliant Channel 4 Documentary at http://www.thedocus.com/the-poet-who-loved-the-war-ivor-gurney-documentary

7. **"Words and videos that refuse to flinch**."
Award-winning poet **Mario Petrucci** addressed the Ivor Gurney Society in Ledbury, October 2003 and included a poem he wrote for Gurney. For commemoration day this year, he is launching a Youtube film using the poem. The scene is based on a fleeting reference, by Gurney, to a dangerously sleepwalking soldier [see Michael Hurd, p.99, the undated letter to Marion Scott probably early August 1917]. The film is powerful and uses music provided by Ian Venables.
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZZJx1LdWJX4EecL-IWVnJijvbwsbhVoD

8. **The Cotswold Way and Ivor Gurney**
In the online journal, Panorama, Anne Louise Avery reports on a walk along the Cotswold Way and refers in some depth to Gurney "Of all those who sing and have sung the ancient Cotswold tracks, however, no voice is more poignant than the pastoral composer and poet, Ivor Gurney."
http://www.panoramajournal.org/seen-cotswold-way-england/

The Ivor Gurney Society

www.ivorgurney.co.uk
The Ivor Gurney Trust (www.ivorgurneytrust.com)

***Patrons of the Society*:**
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Ian Partridge CBE
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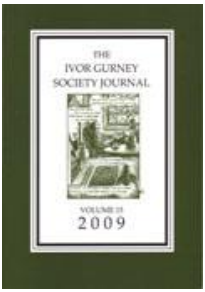
Institutional £12.50; International see website.
International membership:
You can join the Society by contacting the Treasurer at the address below or online at www.ivorgurney.co.uk via PayPal.



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:
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