# THE IVOR GURNEY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 69 March 2023

## The Cotswold village of Bisley



Ivor Gurney's mother, Florence, came from Bisley, a pretty village high up on the Cotswold plateau above Stroud; her Huguenot ancestors, the Luggs, had settled here in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Some jottings on a piece of paper in the archives show Gurney puzzling about the origin of the name – "Lugg – Huguenot, I suppose, Flemish weaver -cloth in Stroud valley. So with Maisemore, Upleadon, Ashleworth – Bisley, I am proud"

This newsletter has several features which focus on Bisley.

## **Society Matters**

## **IGS Society Autumn Event, November 2023**

To coincide with the launch of Gurney's piano music recording - Premiere CD Recording of Ivor Gurney's Three Piano Sonatas on the Naxos label, and Eleanor Rawling's new book (Walking with Ivor Gurney in Gloucestershire/Logaston Press) the society is organising a special event in November 2023 at the Ivor Gurney Hall, The King's School, Gloucester. The event will include an illustrated talk by Eleanor Rawling and a piano recital given by George Rowley. The recital will feature some of the music from the Naxos recording. Full details will be circulated to IGS members in the early Autumn 2023.

#### **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 current rates, see <a href="membership@ivorgurney.co.uk">membership@ivorgurney.co.uk</a> For acknowledgement, include email.

## **April Fredrick and The Gurney Society Journal**

The Society expresses its gratitude to April Fredrick, who has retired as Editor of the Society's journal due to her growing career commitments and her recent marriage. We are immensely grateful for April's expertise and dedication over the past few years. Philip Lancaster has taken on the task, and the next volume will follow once he and Tim Kendall have completed volume two of *Ivor Gurney: The Complete Poetical Works*.

Forthcoming Talks: Aspects of Ivor Gurney (29 June, 28 Sept, 30 Nov 2023) Philip Lancaster will give a series of Gurney Society online talks on aspects of Ivor Gurney and his work. These will take place on Thursday evenings at 7pm via Zoom and will last about an hour. Three talks are so far planned, on Thursdays 29 June, 28 September, and 30 November. Free for members of the Society; donations invited from non-members. Booking via Eventbrite, with tickets and access details for the first event now open at <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talk-aspects-of-ivor-gurney-composer-poet-igs-tickets-559421142697">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talk-aspects-of-ivor-gurney-composer-poet-igs-tickets-559421142697</a>

Thank you to Phil Richardson who regularly proofreads the newsletter.

## Ivor Gurney and the Lugg family of Bisley by Phil Richardson

#### Introduction

In his early years, Ivor Gurney spent little or no time with his relations on his mother's side of the family. Both Michael Hurd and Pamela Blevins quote Florence Gurney's letter written in 1937 to Marion Scott:

.... Ivor hasn't seen a lot of the Luggs he knew the Gurneys better and they hadn't a note of music in them ...." (Hurd 1978 p.9; Blevins 2008 p.54)

#### In The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney Michael Hurd states:

"Exactly what brought Florence Gurney to Gloucester is not known. Her three brothers and four sisters seem to have remained resolutely in the Bisley area...What matters is that she became a regular member of the congregation of All Saints' Church, and there met the young David Gurney." (Hurd 1978 p.9)

#### In Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire Eleanor Rawling suggests:

"The Gurneys would undoubtedly have visited these (Lugg) relations but they do not appear to have made regular visits to this village (Bisley), probably because of the greater distances involved." (Rawling 2011, p19)

Rolf Jordan's painstaking research of the Gurney family resulting in 'The Gurneys of Gloucester' article (IGS Journal 2012 p.25-62) showed that most of David Gurney's brothers moved from Maisemore and occupied various homes in roads off Barton Street, Gloucester. The following account suggests that some, at least, of the Lugg family were living in the same area.

## Florence Lugg's Family

Florence Lugg's parents were William and Mary Ann (née Dutton) Lugg. They had married in 1850 at Stroud. The 1851 Census shows them living at 61, Burton Street, Cheltenham. Their ages are given as 21 though William's age varies across the later Censuses. Their occupations are given as plasterer and milliner respectively. According to the Census they were living with Ann Dutton, a widow aged 40, together with two daughters Luisa (b. 1843) and Emily (b. 1848) and three other lodgers. William and Mary Ann are described as Ann

Dutton's son-in-law and daughter-in-law respectively which does not seem possible! Perhaps son-in law and daughter?

The 1841 Census at Bisley lists Mary Dutton (b. 1831) together with Ann Dutton (b. 1815). The relationships are not given and the birth date does not agree with the 1851 version (1811). William Dutton (b. 1784) is also listed but it is not clear if he is the father or husband of Ann Dutton. In the 1851 Census, Ann and Luisa Dutton and William and Mary Ann Lugg have Bisley, Stroud as their place of birth whereas Emily Dutton's birthplace is given as Cheltenham. William and Mary Ann Lugg returned to Bisley in the mid-1850s. Their daughter Annie was born in Cheltenham in 1852 whereas daughters Mary (1857) and Florence (1860) were born at Stroud.

In 1871 the Luggs were living at Yew Villa, Bisley, Stroud with extra children John (b. 1867) and William (b. 1870). By 1871 Ann Dutton was still in Burton Street, Cheltenham with daughter Emily and a son (!) Henry born 1853. In 1881 she had moved to 9, Francis Terrace, Cheltenham. She is still described as a widow and her occupation is given as seamstress.

Florence's sister Mary died in 1875 (aged 17) at Stroud. Soon afterwards the family moved to Gloucester because the 1881 census shows Florence living with her parents, two sisters Annie and Maria and two brothers John and William at 69 Vauxhall Road, Barton St Mary. Her father is described as a plasterer whilst Florence is a machinist and her mother and two sisters are described as dressmakers. Florence's mother had a dressmaker's shop at 5 Barton Terrace (Jordon 2012). Also recorded is William J. Lugg (b. 1881) and described as "grandson" having been born in London though a record has not yet been found.

## **The Gurney Brothers**

By 1881 David Gurney, Ivor's father, had also moved into Gloucester and was lodging with his older brother John (b. 1853) and his wife Eliza (b. 1854 at Longford) and their three children at 2 Charles Street, Barton St Mary. Charles Street was the first left turn after the Barton Street level crossing carrying the LMS railway lines across Barton Street. The line closed in 1975

Rolf Jordan's research showed that all but one of David's brothers had lived in roads in the Barton Street area. For example, in 1881 Thomas lived at 1 Widden Street before moving to 10 Lower Barton Street; Joseph lived at 4 Charles Street next door to John; and Guy and Walter lived at 11 Millbrook Street. By 1891 Walter had moved to 31 Napier Street (Jordon, 2012).



Barton Street today, looking towards Cotswold Edge

The completion of the Gloucester-Sharpness canal in 1827, and the arrival of the railway and associated industries attracted more people into Gloucester with a consequent increase in house building. This was good for the Gurney brothers who were builders, as was Florence's father. Many of the side roads off Barton Street had been developed from about 1850. Vauxhall Road dates from 1863 and is a few blocks further from Charles Street on the right heading away from the city. Vauxhall Road and its near neighbours had been built on Vauxhall Gardens, an area south of Barton Street. Water and sewerage systems were not supplied until the 1880s.

Anthony Boden records that David Gurney and Florence Lugg had met at All Saints Church where they sang in the choir (Boden 2004 p.21) and were married there on 16 January 1886. All Saint's Church was built in 1875 between the railway line and Charles Street



All Saints Church, Gloucester now an Anglo-Chinese Community Centre

David and Florence were living at 10 Napier Street where Winifred was born on 28 November 1886. By 1889 their address was 20 Widden Street. Napier Street and Widden Street are parallel roads just around from Charles Street. They had moved to 3 Queen Street when Ivor Bertie Gurney was born on 28 August 1890. With so many relations living nearby it seems even more strange that when his parents took Ivor to be baptised at All Saints on 24 September 1890 they were obliged to ask the vicar and his curate, Alfred Cheesman, to act as godparents. Cheesman lived in lodgings in Derby Road during the first years of the 20th century and became a mentor and close friend to the young Ivor.

Two years after Ivor's birth his family moved to 19 Barton Street. By 1891 Florence's parents were living at Barton Terrace (later Tredworth High Street) still with daughter Annie and her brothers John and William. William J. Lugg (aged10) is now described as "nephew". Maria had married George Bond in 1888 and in 1901 and 1911 they were living in Whitfield Street off Station Road and nearer the centre of the city.

By 1901 William and Mary had moved to 5 Albany Street. John is still living with them as are William E (decorator) and the grandson William J who is now described as a painter. William E. Lugg married Ada Goode (b. 1890) who came from Maisemore. In 1911 they were

living at 62 Stratton Road - parallel with Vauxhall Road. William J. Lugg married Amy Rose Perry (b. 1887) and in 1911 they were living at 30 Highworth Road still not too far from Barton Street.

Having joined the choir at All Saint's, Ivor would at least have been in contact with his cousin Joseph Gurney (b. 1880) who was also a chorister and, later, organist at the church (Jordon 2012). However, Ivor's route to the National School in London Road, and then from 1900 the King's School, meant that he walked away from the Barton Street end of the city.

Another twist to the Barton Street connections involves James Harris with whom Ivor was acquainted through his many visits to the Framilode area in his mid-teens and through whom he purchased the "Dorothy" sailing boat. James Harris' first wife Helena died in 1905 but he remarried just before he became lock-keeper at Framilode. His new wife was Ellen (Nellie) Beard (b. 1862 at Framilode). At the time his address was 97 Barton Street and he and Nellie were married at All Saints church in 1911. By the time the Census came around James and Nellie were living at Framilode Post Office (i.e. Lock House). It was at Lock House that Ivor chose to stay in 1913 when recovering from his first breakdown.

#### References

Blevins, Pamela (2008) *Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press)

Boden, Anthony (2004) Stars in a Dark Night (Thrupp, Stroud,

Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd)

Hurd, Michael (1978) *The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd) Jordon, Rolf (2012) *The Gurneys of Gloucester* The Ivor Gurney Society Journal, Number 18

Rawling, Eleanor M. (2011) *Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press)

Also consulted: Jurica, John (1994) *Gloucester A Pictorial History* (Chichester, West Sussex: Phillimore & Co. Ltd)

## **Brimscombe and Bisley Walk**

This is one of 20 poetry walks to appear in Walking with Ivor Gurney in Gloucestershire, Logaston Press, 2023, by Eleanor Rawling.

#### Summary of this walk:

This walk climbs through beautiful beech woodland up one of the steep-sided Stroud valleys (usually known as The Toadsmoor Valley) to reach the village of Bisley where, as Gurney wrote 'Roger Bacon might be born, and my mother was' Letters p.507. It then returns down the valley by a different route, including a stop on the hill shoulder by the pines, as described in the poem *Brimscombe*, to view the village from above as Gurney did on his night walk.

#### Extract from the walk: (from Toadsmoor valley into Bisley)

Follow the meadow path from the Toadsmoor Valley to come out in the lower edge of Bisley. The lane leads upwards past Hartwell House and veers right to find the Bisley Village springs, a stone monument dressed with moss and providing seven spring sources and a stone trough — a prime example of one of Gurney's strange things found on walks. From the spring go straight on up into the High Street to reach a conveniently placed seat with some stone steps that lead up to All Saints Church. Here is a good place to pause and rest — the village shop and Post Office (on up the street on the right-hand side) sells hot drinks and snacks.

## **Cotswold Ways**

One comes across the strangest things in walks:
Fragments of Abbey tithe-barns fixed in modern
And Dutch-sort houses where the water baulks
Weired up, and brick kilns broken among fern,
Old troughs, great stone cisterns bishops might have blessed
Ceremonially, and worthy mounting-stones;
Black timber in red brick, queerly placed
Where Hill stone was looked for — and a manor's bones
Spied in the frame of some wisteria'd house
And mill-falls and sedge pools and Saxon faces;
Stream-sources happened upon in unlikely places,
And Roman-looking hills of small degree

And the surprise of dignity of poplars
At a road end, or the white Cotswold scars
Or sheets spread white against the hazel tree.
Strange the large difference of up-Cotswold ways;
Birdlip climbs bold and treeless to a bend,
Portway to dim wood-lengths without end,
And Crickley goes to cliffs are the crown of days.



**Bisley Village Springs** 

From the seat, go up the steps into the churchyard and, after viewing the church, walk across to the pathway by the stone wall at the far end of the churchyard. Follow the steps down to the lane, turn right. The lane bears left and joins Well Street. Eventually at a junction take the right-hand lane (Back Lane) and walk along with woodland on your left. Soon the entrance gates of 18<sup>th</sup> century Jayne Court (formerly the site of the mediaeval Nether Manor) appear on the right, and shortly after turn left down a long tree-lined avenue to reach one large tree and a footpath to the left through a gate with a cattle grid. This is a pleasant path down a track lined with poplar trees, recalling Gurney's lines in *Cotswold Ways* 'the surprise and dignity of poplars at the road end'. Another poem *The Poplar* celebrates the glory of a single poplar tree - A tall slim poplar / That dances in a hidden corner / Of the old garden (Complete Poetical Works ed Lancaster and Kendall, 2020, p.95).

## Boxing Morning, Before Dawn God Grew Tired of Tempting You A poem by Roger Stennett

Poet, Dante might have made An extra 'Circle in Hell' For the well-meaning benign Or the downright malign, Who consign and commit Any troubled mind To an Asylum's lack of care.

Ivor Gurney (1890-1937)
Poet, composer, countryman
Who breathed Gloucestershire air
As I still do, though TB took you
Decades ago. A skeleton key
In 1937, finally to unlock the door
Of Ward and padded cell. Asylum
Hell.

You'd think Ivor had seen Hell aplenty In the mud of Somme battlefields Enough screaming and insanity To last his un-whole sad lifetime. But no. Fickle Fate and malignity Conspired to make an example of him.

'A butterfly broken upon a wheel'

Three times you tried to escape
Three times to go over the top
And run, willy-nilly, in No Man's Land
Begging for the bullets to find you.
But God was not being charitable
Recaptured and installed
Back in medical Purgatory.

And was it, Purgatory? Inside Your split and splintered Mind Did you imagine that the Ward Was indeed Heaven's Court Room, Where you sat, suffering in silence While Judge Almighty decided, Up, or down. Or worse. Stay put.

Sometimes, scholars of your Misery
Say you believed you were
Shakespeare,
Not just a lad from Gloucester,
But while inside you wrote, like mad,
Like mad you made music too
On crucified, tone-deaf pianos.

And did you also queue for Pills To cure all ills but didn't. Then, or now?

And did you swallow all the meat Of sacred cows, who bellowed bullshit,

And up to date psychological theories Sound as any chocolate teapot? What choice did you have? Then or now?

Sometimes, in Barnwood Asylum, You caught a glimpse of Gloucester sky,

And while you were staring up on high

Sighed, and asked the question. Why? The mantra of the mad, down the Ages

From Eden to cages in countries worldwide
Still happening. Gulags of the Mind.

A long time dying, you were. Leaving Behind poems unread. Songs unheard.

Not for you the brave, heroic death Of Wilfred Owen, Edward Thomas And countless unknown Poet soldiers Slain with a secret Sonnet in their tunic.

No. Tuberculosis 'sniped you' in the lung.

Boxing Morn, before dawn, God grew tired

Of tormenting you. After all, the previous day

Had been Christmas in The Crazy House

Where everyone really was 'Crackers' All containing their own Bad Jokes What gifts were given? Was wine drunk?

Did Baby Jesus appear upon a Ward Round?

Unsound mind, and a body bearing the bullet hole

That sent you packing back home, from The Front,

And later a broken heart, from love unfulfilled,

Killed just a little bit more of you. But chronic murder dripped into your open veins

As Depression remorselessly shot through you.

Unclean, and terrible as any maiming shell.

A shell of yourself, when you died, you were,

On Boxing Morning. Unable to take down

The paper chains that mocked with jollity

And the therapeutic Christmas cards You were all forced to draw and make, Under the sombre eyes and fake care Of nurses. How hollow was that undertaking?

Tell me. Should we ever forgive them, Ivor?

The family who effectively declared you dead,

Or the 'head-doctors' covering medical ignorance

With lobotomies and overdoses. Legal 'pushers'

In starched collars, and with stiff minds.

Me. I do not. Not on your behalf, Or anyone, ever, similarly trapped.

The dead cannot be angry, I am guessing.

The grave deprives us of emotional connection,

Like a blunt instrument, scrubbing synapses clean.

But while I live and draw breath, I will take aim

At intolerant, totalitarian Science and power play,

Bully tactic that takes a fragile, but creative mind

And seeks to 'heal', by practicing total devastation.

#### **Roger Stennett**

Roger Stennett is a professional poet and dramatist living in South Glos.

#### His latest book -

Forty Poems for Dylan Thomas was published Oct 2022

https://www.facebook.com/rogerpst ennett

## Walking With Ivor Gurney

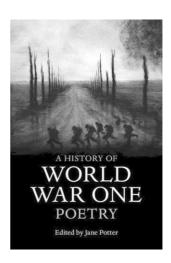
A new publication by **Eleanor Rawling**, Logaston Press, 2023

Walking with Ivor Gurney in Gloucestershire will set out 20 circular walks around Gurney's best-known Gloucestershire places revealing, through his poetry and extracts from his letters and essays, those places that were the sources of his inspiration and the well-springs of his creativity. Specially commissioned maps will be provided to show each section of the trail and those historic, cultural and landscape features that defined it for Ivor Gurney.



Severn Vale from Cam Peak

## A History of WW1 Poetry



Jane Potter (ed)
Cambridge University Press, 2023

This History of World War One Poetry examines popular and literary, ephemeral and enduring poems that the cataclysm of 1914-1918 inspired. Across Europe, poets wrestled with the same problem: how to represent a global conflict, dominated by modern technology, involving millions of combatants and countless civilians.

There is a chapter about Ivor Gurney written by Philip Lancaster

## Musical Update (details from Philip Lancaster and Ian Venables)

#### War Elegy publication

The score of Ivor Gurney's 1920 War Elegy for orchestra has been published by The Maker's Press, in a scholarly edition prepared by Philip Lancaster and Ian Venables. Retailing at £20, it is available from <a href="https://themakerspress.com">https://themakerspress.com</a>, and should shortly be available from Presto Music, from where all of The Maker's Press's other Gurney publications are also available.

#### The Trumpet in Gloucester

On Saturday 25 March 2023, at 7pm, Gloucester Choral Society are performing Ivor Gurney's choral setting of Edward Thomas, The Trumpet, in the orchestration by Philip Lancaster. Also on the programme is Herbert Howells's Hymnus Paradisi and Gerald Finzi's Clarinet Concerto — both composers with strong associations with Gurney. Adrian Partington will be conducting Gloucester Choral Society and the British Sinfonietta in the choral society's slightly belated 175th anniversary concert. Details and tickets from

https://gloucesterchoral.com or by telephone on 01452 768928.

This setting of *The Trumpet* is also going to feature in this year's *Gloucester Three Choirs Festival* in an arrangement by Ian Harrold for the unusual combination of choir, horn, violin, cello, and piano. The programme for the festival has not been released at the time of writing, but details will be announced shortly at <a href="https://www.3choirs.org.">www.3choirs.org.</a>

#### **Herbert Howells Piano Works**

Scholar Jonathan Clinch and pianist Matthew Schellhorn have during the last few years been collaborating on editing and recording Herbert Howells's piano works. Volume two of the series has just been released on Naxos Records, volume one having been issued in July 2020. The majority of the works recorded are première recordings, and the two CDs are well worth exploring. Some of the works were written during the time that Howells and Gurney were studying together, with Herbert Brewer in Gloucester and at the Royal College of Music.

## Finzi Friends on Chosen Hill, 9 September 2023

The Finzi Friends are holding an event at Churchdown and Chosen Hill on 9 September. Details are yet to be confirmed, but the event is to include a reading by poet Katharine Towers from her forthcoming book of poems inspired by Gerald Finzi and his works, *Let him bring a shrubbe*. Gurney Society members are welcome to attend.

#### Gurney's Violin Sonata in D major

EM Records has just released the first recording of Gurney's 1918-1919 violin sonata, in D major. The sonata, performed by Rupert Marshall-Luck and Duncan Honeybourne, is programmed alongside works by Edward Elgar, on a CD titled 'A New Light'. This joins a growing amount of Gurney released on EM Records, who in 2013 issued the first recording of any of Gurney's violin sonatas, with the Sonata in E flat, and more recently the first recording of a string quartet (in D minor), as well as Gurney's song cycles Ludlow & Teme and The Western Playland, and Five Western Watercolours for piano. The new disc is available from all good music retailers, or directly from EM Records.



## Premiere CD Recording of Ivor Gurney's Three Piano Sonatas on the Naxos label

This long-awaited piano disc will be released. Autumn 2023 on the internationally acclaimed Naxos label. The award-winning pianist, George Rowley is to record the works in March 2023. The programme opens with Gurney's youthful three movement *Sonata* in F minor composed in 1910, followed by the first of two Poems, entitled Autumn composed while he was at the RCM in 1912. The slow movement from an incomplete Second Sonata in D written in June 1919 comes next with Gurney's first set of Five Preludes written between 1919 and 1920, and later published by Winthrop Rogers. The final work is the twomovement Third Sonata in D minor, composed in 1920.

(sponsored by the Limoges Trust)

## A Building with Close Gurney Connections for Sale; Church of St Matthew at Twigworth, GLOUCESTER GL2 9BE

- where Ivor Gurney was buried, 1937 and his gravestone is located



Estate Agents: Alder King Guide Price £100,00

The property provides a closed detached church dating from 1842/1844. The building is of a traditional form of construction with solid stone elevations incorporating stained glass windows under pitched timber frame roofs with tile coverings. The front section includes a bell tower with spire. The property provides main tower entrance, nave, north aisle, chancel, organ chamber, vestry and store/boiler room. Graveyard/war memorial to be retained.

Suggested Uses: Children's nursery, Dev Residential Conversion, Healthcare, Religious, Training Centre; Size 2,718 sq ft (253 sq m); Tenure, Freehold <a href="https://www.alderking.com/properties/church-of-st-matthew-gloucester-gl2-9be-97601/">https://www.alderking.com/properties/church-of-st-matthew-gloucester-gl2-9be-97601/</a>

## The Ivor Gurney Society

www.ivorgurney.co.uk
The Ivor Gurney Trust 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.co.uk via PayPal.



#### The Ivor Gurney Society Journal

As well as the bi-annual 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 and Acting Treasurer: Ian Venables <a href="mailto:chair@ivorgurney.co.uk">chair@ivorgurney.co.uk</a>

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