The Songs of John Ireland
Lisa Milne · John Mark Ainsley
Christopher Maltman · Graham Johnson
hyperion
please note

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Recorded in association with The John Ireland Trust

**The Songs of John Ireland**

**COMPACT DISC 1 – 76’30**

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<th>Artist</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Advent (Alice Meynell)</td>
<td>John Mark Ainsley</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Hymn for a Child (Sylvia Townsend Warner)</td>
<td>John Mark Ainsley</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>My Fair (Alice Meynell)</td>
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<td>The Salley Gardens (W B Yeats)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Santa Chiara (Palm Sunday: Naples) (Arthur Symons)</td>
<td>Christopher Maltman</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Tryst (In Fountain Court) (Arthur Symons)</td>
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<td><strong>THREE SONGS (Arthur Symons)</strong></td>
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<td>The Adoration</td>
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<td>The Rat</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>Lisa Milne</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Tutto è sciolto (James Joyce)</td>
<td>Christopher Maltman</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Spring Sorrow (Rupert Brooke)</td>
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<td><strong>TWO SONGS</strong></td>
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<td>The Trellis (Aldous Huxley)</td>
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<td>My true love hath my heart (Sir Philip Sidney)</td>
<td>John Mark Ainsley</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>When I am old * (Ernest Dowson)</td>
<td>Christopher Maltman</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Spleen (Ernest Dowson, after Paul Verlaine)</td>
<td>Christopher Maltman</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Love is a sickness full of woes (Samuel Daniel)</td>
<td>John Mark Ainsley</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>If there were dreams to sell (Thomas Lovell Beddoes)</td>
<td>Lisa Milne</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>If we must part (Ernest Dowson)</td>
<td>Christopher Maltman</td>
<td>1'51</td>
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**FIVE SONGS TO POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY**

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beckon to me to come</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
<td>[2'12]</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>In my sage moments</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
<td>[2'52]</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>It was what you bore with you, woman</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
<td>[1'17]</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The tragedy of that moment</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
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<td>Dear, think not that they will forget you (Her Temple)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
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**THREE SONGS TO POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY**

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<td>Summer Schemes</td>
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<td>Her Song</td>
<td>LISA MILNE</td>
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<td>Weathers</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>I have twelve oxen (anonymous, early English)</td>
<td>LISA MILNE</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Great Things (Thomas Hardy)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
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<td>Earth’s Call (A Sylvan Rhapsody) (Harold Monro)</td>
<td>LISA MILNE</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Hope the Hornblower (Sir Henry Newbolt)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
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**SONGS OF A WAYFARER**

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Memory (William Blake)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>When daffodils begin to peer (William Shakespeare)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
<td>[2'06]</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>English May (Dante Gabriel Rossetti)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
<td>[2'47]</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I was not sorrowful (Spleen) (Ernest Dowson)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
<td>[3'17]</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>I will walk on the earth (James Vila Blake)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
<td>[1'28]</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Ladslove (A E Housman)</td>
<td>JOHN MARK AINSLEY</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>The Heart’s Desire (A E Housman)</td>
<td>JOHN MARK AINSLEY</td>
<td>[2'33]</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>When I am dead, my dearest (Christina Rossetti)</td>
<td>LISA MILNE</td>
<td>[1'54]</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>What art thou thinking of? (Christina Rossetti)</td>
<td>LISA MILNE</td>
<td>[3'26]</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>During Music (Dante Gabriel Rossetti)</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN</td>
<td>[2'49]</td>
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**MOTHER AND CHILD (Christina Rossetti)**

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Newborn</td>
<td>LISA MILNE</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The Only Child</td>
<td>LISA MILNE</td>
<td>[1'44]</td>
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Hope
Skylark and Nightingale
The Blind Boy
Baby
Death-parting
The Garland
The Vagabond (John Masefield)
The Bells of San Marie (John Masefield)
Sea Fever (John Masefield)
The Journey (Ernest Blake)
Bed in Summer (Robert Louis Stevenson)

FIVE XVth-CENTURY POEMS
A Thanksgiving (William Cornish)
All in a garden green (Thomas Howell)
An Aside (anonymous)
A Report Song (Nicholas Breton)
The Sweet Season (Richard Edwardes)
The Sacred Flame (Mary Coleridge)
Remember (Mary Coleridge)

THREE SONGS
Love and Friendship (Emily Brontë)
Friendship in Misfortune (anonymous)
The One Hope (Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

WE’LL TO THE WOODS NO MORE
We’ll to the woods no more (A E Housman)
In Boyhood (A E Housman)
Spring will not wait (piano solo)
When lights go rolling round the sky (James Vila Blake)
“Symphonies? Concertos? Bah! Who wants another symphony if he can write a song like that?”

The song was George Gershwin’s The Man I Love; its admirer, John Ireland. This wasn’t the only time Ireland – defensively? – talked up the art of the specialist song-writer, citing for example the importance of song to such composers as Roger Quilter and Edvard Grieg. And although Ireland wrote underrated masterpieces in a variety of genres (from the exquisite Second Violin Sonata to the still frustratingly neglected Piano Concerto), his vocal compositions stand at the heart of his output alongside the solo piano music, the two interests combining in many of the songs where the ‘accompaniments’ offer such rich challenges and opportunities for the pianist, reflecting Ireland’s own skills as a player.

The solo songs (the greater number of which are included in this anthology) span some thirty-five years of Ireland’s life, from the Songs of a Wayfarer, written in part as early as 1903 (the year in which the composer was twenty-four) to the 1938 Five XVIIth-Century Poems. In a way, the range in style of the songs reflects the decline in domestic music-making that some will argue has been far more damaging to music appreciation (in the long run) than what has or has not been happening in our schools. Many of Ireland’s early- to middle-period songs embrace the feel of the once money-spinning ballads that were staple fare in so many homes – the style of The Bells of San Marie, Sea Fever and Great Things. Then there are the ‘art’ songs, still accessible but written for more serious-minded performers of varying abilities, embracing, for example, Songs Sacred and Profane and the Five XVIIth-Century Poems. Finally, there is the clutch of songs which take the art song into an intensely personal realm, most clearly heard in the soul-searching Five Poems by Thomas Hardy – mirroring the century’s broad movement whereby composers have become less and less embarrassed to place self-expression before saleability.

Rather than sound off myself, let me refer you to the opinion of the distinguished writer and critic William Mann for a line on Ireland’s songs. As far as English music is concerned, he wrote as long ago as 1975, these songs are ‘perhaps the most important between Purcell and Britten’. Such a statement of confidence by a leading authority has not, it need hardly be said, been reflected commensurately in terms of concert performances of the breadth of Ireland’s songs – whether from lack of knowledge, belief, or the fear of being thought lacking in judgement or gravitas by sober-faced critics. Sad. Not least because, for one thing, these songs lack for nothing in terms of range of subject matter, colour and emotion. Which might prompt the familiar question of just how much we can expect to learn about a composer from his or her music.
What would we say of this Dr Ireland from the evidence purely of the mood of his songs? There is nostalgia and wistfulness, but also exuberant high spirits. There is romantic feeling, but also tortured anguish and a rather blatant sentimentality. He knows how to write sensuous, even sexy, music. There is passion all right, and that much under-rated E-word as far as English composers are concerned – ecstasy – is part of his emotional palette. All this from a man with a centre-parting, steel-rimmed spectacles and a preference for jackets rather than jumpers.

What then is confirmed if we are allowed the additional clue that Ireland’s choice of texts was meaningfully informed by a passionate rather than passing love of literature? Well, above all we can’t miss his love of nature – landscapes and seascapes, seasons of the year (e.g. Sea Fever, Earth’s Call, Songs of a Wayfarer). He could apparently be given to bouts of sentimentality (Spring Sorrow and the cycle Mother and Child). He seems to have been someone who held friendship as an especially sacred trust (Love and friendship, Friendship in misfortune and more), but who was nothing if not emotionally insecure in the area where friendship moved into love (not just the Hardy songs mentioned above, but in the acid sounds of The Rat and the passionate cry of The Heart’s Desire). A feeling for the sensuously mystical hovers here and there (The Trellis, Tryst) but equally this Dr Ireland is not beyond displaying a keen, uncomplicated sense of humour (Hymn for a Child) and certainly enjoys – when the mood takes him – a rollicking good time, pint-glass in hand (Hope the Hornblower, When lights go rolling round the sky and the cider-stained Great Things). Religion hovers ambivalently somewhere in the background (The Adoration), but when his guard is down, he will colour his views on the Establishment with a certain sharp-edged cynicism (The Scapegoat). And so on.

Such an analysis of course runs the risk of being simplistic. Human beings are often even more complex and elusive than we can imagine. So how much evidence is there from Ireland’s life for what prompted the subjects and moods of his songs? As far as the core of his psyche is concerned, his friend and biographer John Longmire wrote of a man for whom life was a ‘maelstrom of uncertainty’, who spent his days trying to lay the ghosts of childhood pain. A man who needed love more than admiration, who was possessive in his friendships and could put those friends through an emotional mangle. As a spin-off from that, Longmire paints a picture of a composer who viewed his own music with wry self-deprecation.

If we take it that childhood and adolescent years are indeed crucial to personal development, then Ireland had a somewhat mixed send-off as far as his family background was concerned. He was born on the 13th August 1879 in Bowdon, Cheshire. His mother, Annie, was thirty years younger than her husband, Alexander, who was then still active as the editor of The Manchester Examiner
newspaper, despite being seventy. A large gulf in age for a father and son to span, perhaps, which was maybe one reason why 'Jackie' was very much his mother’s favourite – the prime beneficiary of her artistic and musical interests. She played the piano, the instrument at which the young Ireland was swiftly to excel. He carried her maiden name, Nicholson, as his second name.

On the positive, life-enriching side, Ireland’s parents provided him with the artistic matrix that was in many respects to hold his life together. Apart from providing musical opportunities, Ireland’s home life gave him a lifelong passion for literature. As far as poetry was concerned, he was wedded to Victorian writers and to poets of his own day, not least the so-called ‘Georgians’, proponents of realism and colloquialism under the leadership of such figures as Rupert Brooke and Edward Marsh. Ireland’s choice of poetry to set is clear evidence of his wide reading – through such familiar names as Thomas Hardy, Christina Rossetti and her brother Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Masefield, Robert Louis Stevenson and A E Housman, to those who these days are mainly remembered on the pages of literary dictionaries – Harold Monro, Sylvia Townsend Warner and Alice Meynell, for example. Aside from the ready availability of books and presumably dinner-table discussion, the Ireland home in Bowdon was visited by leading literary and musical figures of the day.

So, more than once it has been observed that Ireland was not so much a songwriter as a setter of poems, a composer who valued above all the skill of enhancing words through music, using every device at his disposal, from catching the native inflection of words (rarely going beyond one note per syllable) to painstakingly seeking out the most appropriate colours and harmonies – inventive harmonies, whether of simplicity and directness or of astringent chromaticism. Not for nothing are two song-cycles described by reference to poem rather than song. Time and again Ireland seems exactly to capture the mood of his chosen texts, not least in his Housman and Hardy settings, although he was the first to admit that he found the act of composing a struggle.

But whatever the intellectual stimulation, other of Ireland’s youthful experiences left him – in an emotional sense – frozen in childhood. Both parents were to die in his early teenage years, but it seems that even by then the roots of insecurity had long been growing silently and steadily. He was something of an outsider among his siblings, suffering humiliation and even beatings from
his three sisters and brother. Apparently capable of callousness and cruelty (at least, through a young child’s sensibilities) they acted *in loco parentis* as far as their young brother was concerned during their mother’s bouts of sickness, which must have been threatening enough in themselves. He hated being sent away to school and absconded from it at the age of seven. After experiencing the pain of his parents’ death soon after enrolling as a fourteen-year-old piano student at the Royal College of Music in London, Ireland underwent the indignity of having his financial affairs scrutinised by a pair of guardians who sought to out-scrimp Scrooge in overseeing his financial affairs. Hardly the best preparation for standing on one’s own two feet, although Ireland made the best of the situation by winning scholarships, playing the organ for churches and even tinkling the piano in a London restaurant.

The Royal College of Music itself was no haven from the harshness of his life. Having decided to major in composition the year after entering, Ireland was by no means the first to find his teacher of choice, Charles Villiers Stanford, a hard taskmaster. Student compositions would be tried out by the college orchestra, occasions used by Stanford publicly to demonstrate when things just wouldn’t do. All his life, Ireland was indignant about the ways of ‘musiCOLLEGEists’, was sensitive to criticism, prone to feelings of inferiority.

How these early experiences fed into Ireland’s complex personality is a matter for psychologists but there can be no doubting that they left their mark. How far they contributed to his apparently repressed sexuality – surely evidenced (passionately!) in many of the songs – is a more complex question still. What are we to make of one particular clue – the extraordinary circumstances surrounding his marriage in 1927 (at the age of 48) to the young pianist Dorothy Phillips? Ireland attracted women but was wary of them throughout his life, from landladies and sisters to housekeepers and bounty-hunters, regarding them as ‘a nuisance . . . unreliable’. Maybe the song *An Aside* from the *Five XVth-Century Poems* was intended as more than just a passing humorous observation on womankind. Where did this all come from? Did women fail to come up to the ideal of his mother, to whom he was so close, who was his musical inspiration as a pianist herself? Whatever, Ireland was still capable of being infatuated with an idealised view of feminine beauty. He seems to have entertained the prospect of marriage to Dorothy Phillips not as an expression of feeling (direct emotion) but of honour (abstract concept) – as a way of becoming her protector or guardian in the face of an overbearing father. However, the marriage was a disaster from the beginning and was annulled. Another talented – and by all accounts, pretty – young pianist, Helen Perkin (the dedicatee of the Piano Concerto) helped Ireland get over the whole unhappy episode, becoming for a time an inseparable companion, only for the
relationship to be ended when she started to play the music of other composers. This was viewed by Ireland as something of a betrayal. Not that he was intending to tie the knot himself. Once bitten, twice shy. He always insisted on the *Who’s Who* entry of "bachelor".

Whatever may be the evidence from the occasional song (Ladslove, for example), the accepted view from those who knew Ireland well is that he was not overtly homosexual, although he may have found his breath caught by the looks of the occasional choirboy who came under his charge at St Luke’s Church, Chelsea, in his more than twenty years as organist there. But the same could be said of his response to a particular vision of femininity. Still, male friends whom he could trust mattered enormously to Ireland, though many found him capable of putting them through the emotional shredder. He could be the life and soul of a party, jolly and loquacious, a man who loved the ambience of the traditional English pub – the composer of *Great Things* and *When lights go rolling round the sky*. Others found him capable of cutting friendships short – notwithstanding the fact, as suggested above, that the theme of reliable, long-term, cast-iron friendship is a surprisingly strong thread, pointed up, it seems, within his body of songs. Two sides of the same basic insecurity.

Ireland’s professional life consisted of three main strands, all of them London-based: playing the organ at St Luke’s starting in 1904; from 1923, teaching as a professor at the Royal College of Music (Britten was a pupil); and composing – which he did for over forty years in the studio at 14a Gunter Grove in Chelsea. The affection for London is evident enough in his piano and orchestral music, though not directly in the songs. But for all that the capital was clearly the focus for work and friendship, for pubbing and gossip, the English countryside (foreign parts never held much attraction) had great pulling power for Ireland. Regularly he would motor down to Dorset and Sussex – often would be found rambling on the Downs. He also adored the sight and sound of the sea. He notably loved Jersey, his first visit being on a choir trip in the early years of the century. The island provided inspiration for several works, among them the ubiquitous *Sea Fever*. On the outbreak of the Second World War he actually settled on Guernsey, only to suffer evacuation – at speed – in 1940 on account of the Nazi invasion. When finally the noise and pollution of London outweighed its advantages, Ireland settled in a converted windmill, Rock Mill, near Washington in Sussex, surrounded by glorious scenery. He came upon Rock Mill – ‘For Sale’ notice and all – by chance, while on a country drive in 1953.

The love of the outdoors – so vital an inspiration for Ireland’s songs – was given added potency and spiritual depth by his discovery in 1906 of the writings of Arthur Machen, the Welsh novelist whose works convey an eerie, misty mysticism, paganism and a sense of the grandeur of history.
He and Ireland became good friends, meeting at The King’s Arms in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, where Machen would hold forth unrelentingly to the amusement of the locals. Ireland was to insist that no-one could understand his music unless they had read Machen. If this is the case then the ‘mysticism’ which informed the wild, white-haired Welshman is presumably what lies behind the hypnotic, sensuous sounds and the trademark chromaticism that inform so many of Ireland’s songs. How Machen’s philosophies interfaced with the High Anglicanism that Ireland favoured (and blessed with some marvellous music) is unclear. As in much else, perhaps, he was able subtly to embrace both the orthodox and unorthodox.

Ireland once said that a fortune-teller had predicted he would live to the age of 81. In the event he made it to 82 before slowly succumbing at Rock Mill in 1962. He wrote almost nothing in the last fifteen years of his life. By all accounts the prospect of old age made the ancient insecurities still worse and, when it arrived, was scarcely warmed by any pride in what he had achieved. Rather there was more a sense of loss. Without doubt such feelings were heightened by an awareness that his music was now out of favour in the harsher compositional climate of the post-War years – a great divide which it has taken far too long to re-cross in respect of many more composers than John Ireland. But he never lost his belief in tunes. That most famous of his melodies, Sea Fever, is what arches across the top of his memorial window in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in London – ‘the musicians’ church’.

One summary of Ireland’s life describes it as having been ‘relatively uneventful’. On the outside, maybe. Inside, as the songs make clear, great battles raged and rich passions stirred. In them Ireland reveals himself as perhaps he couldn’t have done in any other way. He once said that he had always written music he wanted to write . . . had only written it when he had something to say. For our part, connecting with the inner life of music that’s new to us, striving in some way to relive the act of creation, is always going to require effort. The reward is not just that of getting to know something, but someone. May these songs of John Ireland not rush past the ear by virtue of the fact that so many are unfamiliar. Give them the time and space to tell his story.
CHRONOLOGICAL NOTES ON THE SONGS

The early cycle Songs of a Wayfarer (c1903/5) hints at the extent to which a love of literature was deeply rooted in Ireland from childhood years – each of the five songs features a different poet. The cycle is dedicated ‘To my friend, Robert Radford’, the English bass who came to prominence in the first decade of this century through such exploits as singing Wagner’s ‘Ring’ cycle under Hans Richter in 1908.

If the musical language of the cycle is not yet highly individual, the mood is already personal. As the title suggests, this is largely music reflecting a kinship with the great outdoors, although a young man’s languor after love steals into English May and, more emphatically, into the hypnotic I was not sorrowful, a song whose chromaticism and emotional centre of gravity hints at the more mature Ireland.

The cycle’s texts feature poets both well- and (now) lesser-known. The innocently pastoral Memory – a nostalgie journey via the mind’s eye to remembered scenes – sets the familiar poem by William Blake. The words for When daffodils begin to peer come from Act IV Scene II of Shakespeare’s A Winter’s Tale. The rhythmic complexity of Ireland’s setting vividly heightens the sense of ecstasy at the arrival of spring. English May is by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the Pre-Raphaelite painter and poet to whom Ireland returned regularly for inspiration. The opening line, ‘Were God your health were as this month of May’ refers directly to the chronic illness of Rossetti’s mistress (and model for so many of his paintings), Elizabeth Siddal. Rossetti married her in 1860, two years before she died from an overdose of laudanum.

The atmospheric, other-worldly I was not sorrowful uses words by Ernest Dowson, the English Symbolist poet who died in 1900 at the age of thirty-three. Described by W B Yeats as ‘timid, silent, a little melancholy’, Dowson became infatuated in 1891 with the twelve-year-old Adelaide Foltinowicz, who became the focus of love and innocence in his often world-weary poetry.

The cycle closes in bracing, swaggering fashion with I will walk on the earth – a no-holds-barred paean of praise to the outdoor life, with words by another Blake – James Vila Blake. The use of his poetry is perhaps one index for the scope of Ireland’s reading. Blake seems all but forgotten now, and only from an obscure 1908 Chicago publication (in the possession of the John Ireland Trust) comes the intriguing assessment of him as ‘poet, preacher, theologian, litteratur ...a master-mind in sweep of prophetic vision’. Sic transit gloria mundi.
**Hope the Hornblower** (pre-1911) is the archetypal galloping song. The words are by one of the masters of stirring, patriotic verse, Sir Henry Newbolt (1862-1938). Newbolt had a special interest in the sea but here remains a landlubber, depicting the thrill of riding out to hunt. Such hearty, fresh-air music may not be to everyone’s taste, but taken on its merits Ireland’s setting is nothing if not exhilarating, the music matching the excitement of the poem in every bar.

**When lights go rolling round the sky** (c.1911) again features the words of James Vila Blake. Ireland wrote nothing more extrovert than this – a song to banish melancholy, with a little help from Molly, Polly and ‘John so Jolly’. For Ireland, a marking of ‘Allegro con brio’ was really pushing the boat out.

**Sea Fever** (1913) remains Ireland’s best-known song. It was an immense popular success once a publisher was found after a dispiritingly long search: the firm, Augener, finally accepted it the year before the outbreak of The Great War. Augener himself was then promptly interned by the British government for the duration of the war, a sequence of events which gave Ireland a lifelong cause for merriment. The song sets one of the *Salt-Water Ballads* which first announced John Masefield (1878-1967) as a poet in 1902. It is said that Masefield disliked Ireland’s setting, despite the royalties it must have earned for him. A measure of the song’s popularity was its success in a 1930s BBC poll of all songs of any description heard over the airwaves. *Sea Fever* effortlessly beat all-comers, a fact which in part indicates the nature of its appeal to the slowly dying breed of ballad-lovers.

The words are a passionate expression of excitement at the sight and sounds of the sea (specifically prompted by Ireland’s love of Jersey, it seems) matched by a chordal accompaniment which for the most part features Ireland’s trade-mark nut-brown richness of sound. For all the urgency suggested by the words, the song is marked ‘Lento’, and the performance featured in this recording adopts a broad tempo. The question of the appropriate speed has nonetheless long been a matter of some debate. Ireland made it clear that he preferred a slower speed to make sure that the rich piano harmonies shone through. John Masefield, on the other hand, hated the song largely on account of the dirge-like performances that were usually served up. Apparently only the singer Gordon Cleather received his imprimatur for the speed and urgency he brought to the song.
**Bed in Summer** was written just before the outbreak of The Great War and published in 1915. Ireland’s simple setting, with its hopalong dotted triplet rhythm, catches delightfully the mood of an infant tantrum over bedtime schedules as caught in the accurately observed (!) poem by Robert Louis Stevenson. The child’s confusion and resentment are all down to changes in daylight hours with the seasons.

The period from the latter part of The Great War to 1921 was the most fertile of Ireland’s career as far as songs are concerned. Clearly there are those which reflect the composer’s horror at the conflict, especially poignant for someone who was a lifelong pacifist. Among these are the two sets of *Two Songs* to poems by E T Cooper and Rupert Brooke respectively (not recorded here) which reflect the tragedy and futility of war. But paradoxically there are also songs of very different moods, conveying everything from a delight in nature and love to rollicking good humour.

**The Heart’s Desire** is Ireland’s 1917 setting of the final three of the five stanzas of A E Housman’s poem ‘March’ from *A Shropshire Lad*. Housman never liked composers ‘tampering’ with his verse, so what he made of this blatant truncation is anyone’s guess. The rolling, rich-toned melody marks this off as one of the most overtly passionate of Ireland’s songs. As boys and girls go to the fields in search of daffodils and palms, so should lovers be able to fulfil their hearts’ desires . . . ‘lovers should be loved again’ – full of meaning for Housman – in his case as a repressed homosexual – and apparently also for Ireland, who repeats the final two lines with great force.

**Earth’s Call** (subtitled ‘A Sylvan Rhapsody’) from 1918 takes us back to the world of the *Songs of a Wayfarer*, with its ecstatic evocation of the ‘innocent’ discovery of nature by two travellers – sky, birds, trees, ploughed land . . . with a culminating impassioned invitation: ‘. . . press your heart against the ground / Let us both listen till we understand / Each through the other every natural sound’. For my money this is one of the finest of all Ireland songs, the atmosphere, especially at the start, bringing to mind some fresh-painted Impressionist picture of a breezy, airy, light-drenched country scene. Anyone with scruples about musical imitations of cuckoos may, on this occasion, be missing the point. Ditto anyone in doubt as to whether passion or ecstasy lurked within the breast of Ireland, the well-groomed bachelor. And what interest, challenge and sheer enjoyment there is for the pianist! The poem is from Harold Monro’s volume *Strange Meetings*. Monro was born in Belgium in 1879 but came to England at the age of seven.
He was renowned as the founder of The Poetry Bookshop which from 1913 highlighted the work of contemporary poets through publications and the staging of public readings. Monro’s own work was championed by T S Eliot.

The hauntingly simple, perennially popular *Spring Sorrow* marked a return for Ireland to the poetry of Rupert Brooke, an early victim of the war. (He died on a hospital ship in the Aegean in 1915.) While initially seeming to breathe relief at the arrival of another spring, the ultimately bitter-sweet message is summed up in the final lines ‘... the hawthorn hedge puts forth its buds / And my heart puts forth its pain’ – perhaps intended by Ireland as an expression of hope viewed through the suffering of almost four years of war. It is said that the published ending was selected by a pupil of Ireland’s to whom the composer played three possible conclusions. An early example of musical multiple choice.

1918 also saw settings of two poems by Mary Coleridge (great-grandaughter of Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s brother) who died in 1907. Both *The Sacred Flame* and *Remember* extol, with more than a sliver of sentimentality, the virtues of long-lasting love, a theme to which Ireland returned on several occasions, more than hinting at the insecurities within.

**If there were dreams to sell.** Again from 1918, is a setting of the poem *Dream Pedlary* by Thomas Lovell Beddoes (1803-1849). The dream the poet wishes to buy, to ‘heal my ill’, is a ‘cottage lone and still’. A complex character, Beddoes trained in medicine but was regarded as too much of a political revolutionary to be allowed to further his career as a university academic. He died by his own hand. *Dream Pedlary* remains his best-known poetic work, in part thanks to Ireland’s direct, straightforward setting featuring a tune that you can start humming from memory as early as the second time around.

Christina Rossetti’s often sombre, introspective poetry attracted Ireland in much the same way as did that of Thomas Hardy, notwithstanding the fact that Rossetti was a card-carrying High Anglican and Hardy a convinced atheist. The 1918 *Mother and Child* song-cycle contains some of Ireland’s most spare, straightforward musical textures and ideas, matching the simplicity of the texts. The songs are settings of eight ‘Nursery Rhymes’ from Rossetti’s anthology *Sing-Song* – naive and over-emotional to modern sensibilities and reflecting the preoccupation with domestic death which haunted both the Victorian mind and Rossetti’s poetry. What drew Ireland to such mawkish material is an interesting psychological question, perhaps reflecting the sentimentalism and mood of loss that infected so many minds as The Great War drew to a close. Having said that, he was once quoted as having referred to himself as ‘an emotional old sod’.
There are no fewer than three lullabies (Newborn, The Only Child and Baby). Hope describes the child’s frustration with the fact that neither snow nor sand are any good for growing things. Skylark and Nightingale displays the joy of discovering birdsong by day and by night. In The Blind Boy a child blind from birth looks forward to seeing ‘beautiful flowers and birds in bow’rs’ in the afterlife. Despite Rossetti’s religious convictions, Death-parting carries the flavour of Victorian doubt in the pessimistic, gloom-laden line on the death of a child, ‘Never to meet again, my dear / Never to part again’. And smell the flowers at the funeral in The Garland. The cycle is dedicated to one of Ireland’s sisters.

1918 and 1919 saw work on Three Songs to poems by Arthur Symons (1865-1945), the Welsh-born critic and poet, friend to Oscar Wilde and W B Yeats, and himself a risqué society figure of the 1890s. Here we more obviously enter the world of Ireland’s more mature music – darker, more introverted, less direct . . . mystical, chromatic, even acidic. Having said this, The Adoration also manages at times to suggest the simplicity in line and cadence of an Elizabethan lute-song. In the poem, Symons borrows the imagery of gold, frankincense and myrrh from the Nativity. They become gifts laid at the feet of an intended lover, who nonetheless rejects the offerings in favour of her ‘Whom you have loved of old.’ The Rat is also concerned with rejection. The pain of remembered love ‘gnaws at my heart like a rat that gnaws at a beam / In the dusty dark of a ghost-frequented house.’ In Rest Symons and Ireland create a magical, drowsy picture of a warm and peaceful summer day, although the spell is threatened by the plea to the ‘Heart’ not to find rest – ‘Or if thou must, cease to beat in my breast’. Less reflective in character is I have twelve oxen (1918), a setting of an early English text from the days when oxen (clearly of many different colours and hues according to the poem) strode these lands. The poet does nothing more than show them off to a ‘little pretty boy’. On more than the surface this seems robust, high-spirited stuff (and can be sung and played as such) but intriguingly the song is marked ‘Allegretto grazioso’ by Ireland, emphasised by ‘con grazia’ in the opening bar. One commentator has even referred to the ‘gentleness’ of the setting.

The Bells of San Marie dates from 1919. A foursquare four-bar introduction doesn’t bode well, but the ballad style of this simple bell-haunted song about the delights of a mythical seaport ensured for it a lengthy popularity. Ireland here returned to poetry by John Masefield in familiar salt-encrusted mood. The ‘sonsie seamen’ look forward to San Marie’s main attractions – drink and campanology. Happily, bell-ringing and beer-drinking remain companion pursuits to this day. Or so they say.
The Journey (1920) sets words by Ernest Blake – another Blake whom time would seem to have forgotten. A gently galloping accompaniment frames his depiction of a journey by horse through landscapes of trees and rivers.

The set of Two Songs from 1920 features poems by Aldous Huxley (The Trellis) and the Elizabethan courtier and scholar Sir Philip Sidney (the ever-admired sonnet My true love hath my heart, and I have his). In the 1920s Huxley was on the threshold of the kind of fame as a novelist which would eclipse his extended early efforts as a poet. The Trellis, which dates from 1918, describes the silent kisses and white caresses enjoyed behind the thick flower’d trellis protecting the lovers from 'prying eyes of malice’. Another intriguing choice of subject-matter by Ireland, who weaves round the words hypnotic, hazy, sensous lines. Ecstatic moments for the lovers, but what secret inner world of Ireland’s desire/frustration is reflected here? In Ireland’s full-hearted setting of lines selected from My true love hath my heart, the melody is reminiscent of, say, Roger Quilter, above a passionately chromatic accompaniment.

Ireland returned to Housman in 1920/21 for the song-cycle The Land of Lost Content, one of the more searching examinations of the full emotional depth of Housman’s Shropshire Lad poems, with their heady sense of loss, fatalism and nostalgia. Significantly perhaps, the title of Ireland’s cycle was culled from a Shropshire Lad poem (‘If truth in hearts that perish’) which he in fact didn’t set – suggesting the words had special significance to him. The cycle was written for the tenor Gervase Elwes who was unfortunately killed by a train before the first performance took place. This collection contains only the second song in the cycle, Ladslove, with its musing on the story of Narcissus, the Greek youth who fell in love with his own reflection in a pool of water.

The words of Love is a sickness full of woes (1921) are by Samuel Daniel (1562/3-1619), a poet, translator and writer of tragedies and masques who did service at the court of Queen Anne. Ireland’s music has the whiff of an Elizabethan feel to it and imaginatively offsets the basically straightforward rhythmic pattern of the poem, which lightly muses on the pains associated with love.

The Vagabond (1922) is not to be confused with the first song in Vaughan Williams’s Songs of Travel, although the theme and sentiments are much the same – namely, the simple pleasures of an outdoor life spent on the road. Ireland’s setting of John Masefield’s words has the flavour of a music-hall monologue, the natural speech rhythms shadowed by a discreet accompaniment.
When I am dead, my dearest is a plea by the poet, Christina Rossetti once more, that her death should carry no burden of remembrance to those left behind. Although its date of composition is given as 1924, the music carries the dedication: ‘To A.G.M: Cerne Abbas, June 1925’. ‘A.G.M.’ was Arthur Miller, the son of a Chelsea antiques dealer who enjoyed Ireland’s regular custom. Miller the younger was a close friend of Ireland and the dedicatee of several of his works, which were usually composed to mark Miller’s birthdays on 22 February. Given the song’s date, it is unclear whether or not this is another birthday gift, but at least we are offered the serendipitous information that Ireland seems to have holidayed in Dorset in the summer of 1925. The apparent simplicity of the song shouldn’t mask Ireland’s masterly economy of means and his skill at the deft placement of chords in the accompaniment. This song also exists in Ireland’s own version for string quartet. A further 1924 Rossetti setting, What art thou thinking of? belongs alongside the Mother and Child cycle, reflecting as it does a child’s vision of heaven, and pleasure at the thought of living there now.

Thomas Hardy’s poetry and John Ireland’s music were in many ways made for each other – most essentially in terms of the introspection and fatalism common to both, factors which also made Hardy the perfect inspiration for the composer Gerald Finzi. The surprise is that it took Ireland quite so long to set words by one of his favourite writers, whose work he must have known for many years. Amusingly though, Ireland’s first Hardy setting – which in a way opened the floodgates – was as convivial and extrovert a song as he wrote. Great Things (1925, three years before Hardy’s death in his eighties) is Saturday-night-down-the-pub stuff (Ireland was a keen drinker), tipsy from the piano part in the very first bar (excuse the pun). The song extols the virtues of cider, dancing . . . and most of all, Love, which flies in the face of death.

Great Things was followed by the Three Songs to Poems by Thomas Hardy (also 1925). For all the apparent lightness of the setting, coloured by a gentle melancholy, Summer Schemes as a poem carries the very hallmark of fatalism, personal insecurity, fear of commitment to the future. There may be feverish excitement at making plans for exploring the world of nature once summer comes, ‘but who shall say what may not chance before that day’. In Her Song, the female voice tells of how a favourite song served her through bright and despairing days. In the simple, mildly chromatic accompaniment Ireland demonstrates once again that less is sometimes more. Weathers dances along in a jaunty triplet rhythm marked ‘Allegretto pastorale’, the song simply contrasting fair weather and foul.
The sea once again looms large in Santa Chiara (1925) to a poem by Arthur Symons. The song is subtitled ‘Palm Sunday: Naples’. Here, though, the sights of the sea have lost their allure: ‘I have grown tired of all these things. And what is left for me?’

1926 saw the composition of the three settings which two years later were published under the collective title Three Songs. In the first two, Ireland returns to the themes of The Sacred Flame and Remember – the solid virtue of constant, through-thick-and-thin friendship. Love and Friendship is dedicated ‘to A.G.M for February 22nd 1926’, so another birthday gift for his friend Arthur Miller. It has a poem by Emily Brontë (1818-1848) as its text, which in quintessential Victorian fashion likens love to Nature – Love is like a wild rose from which the petals fall all too soon, but holly remains green to the end of the year. The second song of the set, Friendship in Misfortune (to an anonymous text), compares the love that springs from such friendship in misfortune to the ivy that ‘clings, when every hope has flown’. The One Hope marks another of Ireland’s excursions into verse by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. This poem teases with a guessing game (‘When . . . all is vain, what shall assuage the unforgotten pain?’ etc) – with the key word (‘Hope’, naturally enough) being revealed only at the last.

The short ‘cycle’ We’ll to the woods no more (1926/27) sees Ireland once more picking up the threads of his admiration for A E Housman, and in the process providing yet another birthday offering for his friend Arthur Miller. The cycle in fact consists of two songs plus a poignant, extended postlude for piano, Spring will not wait. Both songs deal with Ireland’s and Housman’s deep sense of the fragility of life and friendship. The source is not A Shropshire Lad but Housman’s Last Poems, published in 1922, for which We’ll to the woods no more formed a kind of prelude. Its haunting lines are ostensibly concerned with sadness at the onset of winter – ‘the laurels are all cut’ – but clearly is caught up in a more universal sense of loss. In Boyhood returns to the familiar Ireland theme of lasting friendships, but the ‘winter’ of the first song finds its counterpart here in the knowledge that ‘the hearts I lost my own to’ have gone overseas where ‘they died for me’. . . one of those uncanny pieces of apparent prescience to be found so often in A Shropshire Lad, giving it that relevance during The Great War which made it a best-seller.

The Five Poems of Thomas Hardy, from 1926, are immediately more chromatic than the previous set, more intensely personal, somehow presaging the anguish and embarrassment that must have surrounded Ireland’s brief excursion into marriage the following year. Many have seen this cycle as the summit of Ireland’s achievement as a songwriter – dense, fibrous, deeply serious, passionate – and it is hard to argue against that, whatever one’s personal favourites among the composer’s songs.
Unlike the previous set of Hardy songs, this sequence is presented as a genuine cycle, on the ‘theme’ of love remaining always painfully, tantalisingly out of reach. The first song, **Beckon to me to come**, is an unspoken plea for a sign from the intended lover that feelings might possibly be reciprocated. **In my sage moments** muses on the idea of setting hope of that love aside, but builds to an extraordinarily passionate call of ‘Come!’.

**It was what you bore with you, woman** is the emotional hinge-point of the cycle – firstly a hushed, breathless expression of the lover’s appeal, followed by the bitter realisation that she is unaware, unresponsive. The same idea is carried through into **The tragedy of that moment**, expressing the pain of being in the same room as the person who has not returned love. The mood of the song recalls some of Gerald Finzi’s darker settings of Thomas Hardy. The cycle nonetheless ends with the love being transfigured, in **Dear, think not that they will forget you**. Excitement builds swiftly from a whisper to a shattering climactic moment on ‘I will build up a temple’ – a shrine to the woman who has rejected him. If love cannot be shared, then the temple will make men marvel at her charms. Ireland’s setting ends in deep (literally, in keyboard terms) introspection after we hear that though men may indeed wonder, none will ever know who constructed the temple.

In his second set of **Two Songs** (1926) Ireland returned again to poetry both by Arthur Symons (Tryst) and Dante Gabriel Rossetti (During Music). As with The Trellis, the setting for Tryst is a drowsy summer day, the context sexual, the music sensuous. But the singer waits only – by the end of the song the tryst is yet to be kept, despite the passionate imploring of ‘Come soon’. Rippling quavers define the similarly hypnotic mood of During Music. The poet – musically illiterate himself – marvels at the power of music expressed in the piano-playing of his lover . . . which only enhances his awareness that the rise and fall of the fingers on the keys ‘stirs that shade within thy breast’.

**If we must part** (1929) returns again to the poetry of Ernest Dowson. The theme is a variant on the by now familiar one of friendship . . . this time, how to say goodbye. Words are useless, displays of emotion too painful. The alternative is very British, very stiff upper lip, very Ireland. Just say ‘Until tomorrow or some other day’ and leave the rest to silence. Never mind the hurt inside. Another setting of words by Ernest Dowson, **When I am old**, seems to date from the 1920s. This only recently came to light when the manuscript turned up in Zürich. It is now lodged with the Syndics of Cambridge University Music Library who have generously facilitated the first recording of this song. The poem is a plea to a loved one to dwell on earlier, happier
times when old age comes – the choice of the text by Ireland being evidence perhaps of his morbid fear of growing old. The rich-harmonied setting builds to a heartfelt climax, marked ‘passionato’, on the repeated words ‘My life’s one love’.

The Songs Sacred and Profane, written over two years on either side of 1930, principally showcase two female poets: Alice Meynell (The Advent and My Fair) and Sylvia Townsend Warner (Hymn for a Child, The Soldier’s Return and The Scapegoat). Alice Meynell (1847-1922) was also an essayist and critic. A convert to Roman Catholicism in 1868, she gained a special reputation for the poetry she wrote reflecting a sense of religious mystery. Sylvia Townsend Warner (1893-1978) was the daughter of a master at Harrow School. A novelist as well as a poet, she also joined the editorial board of the Church Music project in 1917 and then spent ten years working on the milestone ten-volume Tudor Church Music publication. In some literary circles her poetry was considered to fit her for the title of the ‘female Thomas Hardy’. The one other poem in the set, The Salley Gardens, is by W B Yeats.

Working on this sequence of songs formed a significant element in Ireland’s emotional and musical recuperation from the shock of his disastrous marriage. This is no cycle, rather a loose assemblage of songs reflecting aspects of human and religious experience. The Advent expresses the ordinary human side to the extraordinary fact of the incarnation of Christ. Hymn for a Child is a deliciously witty retelling of the Biblical story of the young Jesus confounding the elders in the temple, complete with rhymes so dreadfully droll they are delightful. The song ends with an ironic (child’s?) prayer for help in emulating such discreet behaviour as displayed by Jesus, the ‘nicely brought up child’. My Fair is a passionate love song, though one which is fully aware of the finite nature of that love. Its complexities are then cleared off the palate by the beautiful, wistful lines of The Salley Gardens, about a youthful experience of being rejected in love.

The Soldier’s Return pictures the arrival home to his girl of a soldier – on foot, as the tramping, martial accompaniment would make clear to us even if the words were indecipherable. Lastly, The Scapegoat is a laugh at the expense of ‘righteous’ men in town snootily pleased with themselves for finding redemption from sin through the services of the goat. But it is the goat (as the skipping, jumping accompaniment makes clear) who really is free. Ireland was the pianist for a performance of this song during a Festival of Britain concert at London’s Wigmore Hall in 1951. By all accounts he had the audience belly-laughing at his playing of the accompaniment under the words ‘Dances on, and on, and on!’.
**Tutto è sciolto** (1932) was Ireland’s contribution to ‘The Joyce Book’ in which thirteen different composers set poems from James Joyce’s collection *Pomes Penyeach*. Among the other contributors were Herbert Howells, Arthur Bliss, E J Moeran, Roger Sessions and Albert Roussel. The book was edited by Herbert Hughes, who also composed a setting. The title of Joyce’s poem *Tutto è sciolto*, as Ireland noted in lines attached to his song, derives from Elvino’s lament over his bride Amina’s apparent infidelity at the beginning of the second act of Bellini’s opera *La Sonnambula*, to which several allusions are made in Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Joyce’s poem is a twilight reflection on lost romantic opportunities, to which Ireland responds with music of subtle, if chromatic, tenderness, while making no musical reference to the Bellini aria.

Ireland’s last song-cycle, the *Five XVth-Century Poems* (note the literary title) dates from 1938 and harks back to his very first cycle – again five songs, again five separate poets and a similar common thread of a feeling for nature. What marks the *Poems* off from the vast majority of Ireland’s songs is the use of the kind of early texts which normally he avoided, unlike many other composers of his day. Complexity gives way to a generally more simple style which – especially in some of the long, flowing lines – again brings Quilter to mind.

The words of the first song, *A Thanksgiving* (for the sights and sounds of spring) have gained in familiarity thanks to their use in Benjamin Britten’s ever-popular *A Ceremony of Carols*. The poem, by Bassus, has a precise date: 1530. The verse for *All in a garden green* (a celebration of the delights of June) is by Thomas Howell, who died around 1580. A West Country man, he was educated at Oxford, then spent his life in the service of the noble Herbert family. Disappointingly, no poet can be assigned to the pithily humorous observation of womankind expressed in *An Aside*, which dates from the reign of Henry VIII. Then again, it is in the nature of the cowardly poet’s observations that, we are told, he will not repeat them in company.

Ireland’s spiky accompaniment wittily suggests sharp-tongued whispering. *A Report Song* is a cheerful 6/8 pastoral number in praise of country pursuits from dancing to wooing, with words by Nicholas Breton (c1545-c1626), one of whose favourite themes as a poet was the poverty of those engaged in his profession . . . though this is not his subject here. Finally, *The Sweet Season* practically overdoses on the pleasures inherent in the month of May, the words being by Richard Edwardes (1523-1566).
COMPACT DISC ONE

SONGS SACRED AND PROFANE

1 The Advent


No sudden thing of glory and fear  The earth, the rain, received the trust,
Was the Lord’s coming; but the dear  The sun and dews, to frame the Just.
Slow Nature’s days followed each other  He drew his daily life from these.
To form the Saviour from his Mother  According to his own decrees
One of the children of the year.  Who makes man from the fertile dust.

Sweet summer and the winter wild,
These brought him forth, the Undefiled.
The happy Springs renewed again
His daily bread, the growing grain,
The food and raiment of the Child.

ALICE MEYNELL (1847-1922)

2 Hymn for a Child

Flocking to the Temple  Just as he disposes
See the priests assemble  Of the Law and Moses,
Where a child expounds  Mary came in haste –
What the wise confounds.  Caught him to her breast:
All the scribes and sages  ‘We have sought thee’ saying –
Quit their dog’s-eared pages;  Chid him for delaying.
Spell-bound by his sense  Then without demur
And his eloquence.  He went back with her.
Speaking without bias,  Those he was amazing
He reviewed Elias;  Straightway broke out praising;
Said the dogs did well,  Calling him a mild

Teach me, gentle Saviour,
Such discreet behaviour
That my elders be
Always pleased with me.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER (1893-1978)
3 My Fair

My Fair, no beauty of thine will last
Save in my love’s eternity.
Thy smiles, that light thee fitfully,
Are lost for ever - their moment past -
Except the few thou givest to me.

Thy sweet words vanish day by day,
As all breath of mortality.
Thy laughter, done, must cease to be,
And all the dear tones pass away,
Except the few that sing to me.

Hide then within my heart, oh, hide
All thou are loth should go from thee.
Be kinder to thyself and me.
My cupful from this river’s tide
Shall never reach the long sad sea.

ALICE MEYNELL (1847-1922)

4 The Salley Gardens

Down by the salley gardens
My love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens
With little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy,
As the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish,
With her would not agree.

In a field by the river
My love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder
She laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy,
As the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish,
And now am full of tears.

W B YEATS (1865-1939)

5 The Soldier’s Return

Jump through the hedge, lass!
Run down the lane!
Here’s your soldier-laddie
Come back again.
Coming over the hill
With the sunset at his back –
Never be feared, lass,
Though he look black;

Coming through the meadow
And leaping the watercourse –
Never be feared, lass,
Though his voice be hoarse;
Belike he’s out of breath
With walking from the town.
He will speak better
When the sun’s gone down.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER (1893-1978)
**The Scapegoat**

See the scapegoat, happy beast,
From every personal sin released,
And in the desert hidden apart,
Dancing with a careless heart.

"Lightly weigh the sins of others."
See him skip! "Am I my brother's
Keeper? O never, no, no, no!
Lightly come and lightly go!"

In the town, from sin made free,
Righteous men hold jubilee.
In the desert all alone
The scapegoat dances on and on.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER (1893-1978)

**Santa Chiara (Palm Sunday: Naples)**

Because it is the day of Palms
I sit and watch the little sail
Carry a palm for me,
Lean side-ways on the sea,
Carry a palm in Santa Chiara
The sea is blue from here to Sorrento
And I will watch the sea;
And the sea-wind comes to me.
There are no palms in Santa Chiara
And I see the white clouds lift from Sorrento
To-day or any day for me.
And the dark sail lean upon the sea.

I have grown tired of all these things,
And what is left for me?
I have no place in Santa Chiara
But carry a palm in Santa Chiara,
There is no peace upon the sea.
Carry a palm for me.

ARTHUR SYMONS (1865-1945)
Tryst (In Fountain Court)
The fountain murmuring of sleep,
A drowsy tune;
The flickering green of leaves that keep
The light of June.
Peace, through a slumbering afternoon,
The peace of June,
A waiting ghost, in the blue sky,
The white curved moon;
June, hushed and breathless, waits, and I
Wait too, with June.
Come, through the lingering afternoon,
Soon, love, come soon.
ARTHUR SYMONS (1865-1945)

THREE SONGS

The Adoration

Why have you brought me myrrh,
And frankincense and gold?
Lay at the feet of her
Whom you have loved of old
Your frankincense and gold.
I have brought frankincense
And myrrh and gold to you,
From weary lands far hence
That I have journeyed through
To come at last to you.

I cannot take your gold
And frankincense and myrrh;
My heart was growing cold
While you were following her;
Take back your gold and myrrh.
Too late I come to you
With prayers of frankincense:
Pure gold, sweet myrrh, ye too,
Scorned, must go hence, far hence
As smoking frankincense.

ARTHUR SYMONS (1865-1945)
**The Rat**

Pain gnaws at my heart like a rat that gnaws at a beam
In the dusty dark of a ghost frequented house;
And I dream of the days forgotten, of love the dream.
The desire of her eyes unappeased, and the peace of her brows.
I can hear the old rat gnaw in the dark by night.
In the deep overshadowing dust that the years have cast;
He gnaws at my heart that is empty of all delight,
He stirs the dust where the feet of my dreams had passed.

ARTHUR SYMONS (1865-1945)

**Rest**

The peace of a wandering sky,
Silence, only the cry
Of the crickets, suddenly still,
A bee on the window sill,
A bird’s wing, rushing and soft,
Three flails that tramp in the loft,
Summer murmuring
Some sweet, slumberous thing,
Half asleep; but thou cease,
Heart, to hunger for peace,
Or, if thou must find rest,
Cease to beat in my breast.

ARTHUR SYMONS (1865-1945)
Tutto è sciolto

A birdless heaven, sea dusk, one lone star
Piercing the west,
As thou, fond heart, love's time, so faint, so far,
Rememberest.

The clear young eyes' soft look, the candid brow,
The fragrant hair,
Falling as through the silence falleth now
Dusk of the air.

Why then, remembering those shy
Sweet lures, repine
When the dear love she yielded with a sigh
Was all but thine?

JAMES JOYCE (1882-1941)

Spring Sorrow

All suddenly the wind comes soft,
And Spring is here again;
And the hawthorn quickens with buds of green
And my heart with buds of pain.

My heart all Winter lay so numb,
The earth so dead and frore,
That I never thought the Spring would come,
Or my heart wake any more.

But Winter’s broken and earth has woken
And the small birds cry again.
And the hawthorn hedge puts forth its buds,
And my heart puts forth its pain.

RUPERT BROOKE (1887-1915)
TWO SONGS

The Trellis

Thick-flowered is the trellis
That hides our joys
From prying eyes of malice
And all annoys,
And we lie rosily bowered.
Through the long afternoons
And evenings endlessly
Drawn out, when summer swoons
In perfume windlessly,
Sounds our light laughter.

With whispered words between
And silent kisses.
None but the flowers have seen
Our white caresses –
Flowers and the bright-eyed birds.

ALDOUS HUXLEY (1894-1963)

My true love hath my heart
My true love hath my heart and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a bargain better driven.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one;
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own;
I cherish his because in me it bides.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554-1586)

When I am old

When I am old,
And sadly steal apart,
Into the dark and cold,
Friend of my heart!
Remember, if you can,
Not him who lingers,
But that other man,
Who loved and sang,
And had a beating heart,
When I am old!

When I am old,
And all Love's ancient fire
Be tremulous and cold:
My soul's desire!
Remember, if you may,
Nothing of you and me
But yesterday,
When heart on heart
We bid the years conspire
To make us old.
When I am old
And ev’ry star above
Be pitiless and cold:
My life’s one love!
Forbid me not to go:
Remember nought of us
But long ago,
And not at last,
How love and pity strove
When I grew old.
ERNEST DOWSON (1867-1900)

Spleen

Around were all the roses red
The ivy all around was black.
Dear, so thou only move thine head,
Shall all mine old despairs awake!
Too blue, too tender was the sky,
The air too soft, too green the sea.

Always I fear, I know not why,
Some lamentable flight from thee.
I am so tired of holly-sprays
And weary of the bright box-tree,
Of all the endless country ways;
Of everything alas! save thee.
ERNEST DOWSON (1867-1900)
(after Paul Verlaine)

Love is a sickness full of woes

Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that with most cutting grows,
Most barren with best using,
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoy’d it sighing cries
Heigh ho! Heigh ho!
Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
And Jove hath made of it a kind
Not well, nor full nor fasting.
Why so?
SAMUEL DANIEL (1562-1619)
If there were dreams to sell
If there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy?
A cottage lone and still,
Some cost a passing bell;
With bowers nigh,
Some a light sigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
That shakes from Life’s fresh crown
Until I die.
Only a rose-leaf down.
Such pearl from Life’s fresh crown
If there were dreams to sell,
Fain would I shake me down.
Merry and sad to tell,
Were dreams to have at will,
And the crier rang the bell,
This best would heal my ill,
What would you buy?
This would I buy.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES (1803-1849)

If we must part
If we must part,
When love hath been so strong;
Then let it be like this.
Let silence speak:
Not heart on heart,
“Life is a little while, and love is long;
Nor with the useless anguish of a kiss;
A time to sow and reap,
But touch mine hand and say:
And after harvest a long time to sleep,
“Until to-morrow or some other day,
But words are weak”.
If we must part”.

ERNEST DOWSON (1867-1900)
**FIVE SONGS TO POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY** (1840-1928)

1. **Beckon to me to come**

Beckon to me to come
With handkerchief or hand,
Or finger mere or thumb;
Let forecasts be but rough,
Parents more bleak than bland
'Twill be enough
Maid mine,
'Twill be enough!

Two fields, a wood, a tree,
Nothing now more malign
Lies between you and me;
But were they bism, or bluff,
Or snarling sea, one sign
Would be enough
Maid mine,
Would be enough!

2. **In my sage moments**

In my sage moments I can say,
But the thought withers. Why should I
Come not near
Have fear to earn me
But far in foreign regions stay,
Fame from your nearness, though thereby
So that here
Old fires new burn me,
A mind may grow again serene and clear.
And lastly, maybe, tear and overturn me!

So I say, Come: deign again shine
Upon this place
Even if unslackened smart be mine
From that sweet face
And I faint to a phantom past all trace.

3. **It was what you bore with you, woman**

It was what you bore with you, woman,
It was that strange freshness you carried
Not inly were,
Into a soul
That throned you from all else human,
Whereon no thought of yours tarried
However fair!
Two moments at all.

And out from his spirit flew death,
And bale, and ban,
Like the corn-chaff under the breath
of the winnowing-fan.
The tragedy of that moment

What I could not help seeing

Was deeper than the sea,

Covered life as a blot;

When I came in that moment

Yes, that which I was seeing,

And heard you speak to me!

And knew that you were not!

Dear, think not that they will forget you

They may say: 'Why a woman such honour?'

- If craftsmanly art should be mine

I will build up a temple, and set you

- Be told, 'O so sweet was her fame,

Therein as its shrine. None now knows his name.

THREE SONGS TO POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY

Summer Schemes

When friendly summer calls again,
Calls again
Her little fifers to these hills,
We'll go - we two - to that arched fané
Of leafage where they prime their bills
Before they start to flood the plain
With quavers, minims, shakes, and trills.
' - We'll go', I sing; but who shall say
What may not chance before that day!

- And we shall see the waters spring,
Waters spring
From chinks the scrubby copses crown;
And we shall trace their oncreasing
To where the cascade tumbles down
And sends the bobbing growths aswing,
And ferns not quite but almost drown.
'- We shall', I say; but who may sing
Of what another moon will bring!

Her Song

I sang that song on Sunday,
To which an idle while,
I sang that song on Monday,
As fittest to beguile:
I sang it as the year outwore,
And the new slid in;
I thought not what might shape before
Another would begin.

I sang that song in summer,
All unforeknowingly,
To him as a new-comer
From regions strange to me:
I sang it when in afteryears
The shades stretched out,
And paths were faint; and flocking fears
Brought cup-eyed care and doubt.
Sings he that song on Sundays
In some dim land afar,
On Saturdays, or Mondays,
As when the evening star
Glimpsed in upon his bending face,
And my hanging hair,
And time untouched me with a trace
Of soul-smart or despair?

Weathers

This is the weather the cuckoo likes,
And so do I;
When showers betumble the chestnut spikes,
And nestlings fly;
And the little brown nightingale bills his best,
And they sit outside at 'The Traveller's Rest,'
And maids come forth sprig-muslin drest,
And citizens dream of the south and west,
And so do I.

This is the weather the shepherd shuns,
And so do I;
When beeches drip in browns and duns,
And thresh and ply;
And hill-hid tides throb, thrice on three,
And meadow rivulets overflow,
And rooks in families homeward go,
And so do I.

I have twelve oxen

I have twelve oxen that be fair and brown,
And they go a-grazing down by the town.
With hey! with ho! with hey! with ho!
Sawest not you mine oxen, you little pretty boy?
I have twelve oxen, they be fair and white,
And they go a-grazing down by the dyke.
With hey! with ho! with hey! with ho!
Sawest not you mine oxen, you little pretty boy?
I have twelve oxen, they be fair and black
And they go a-grazing down by the lake.
With hey! with ho! with hey! with ho!
Sawest not you mine oxen, you little pretty boy?
I have twelve oxen and they be fair and red
And they go a-grazing down by the mead,
With hey! with ho! with hey! with ho!
Sawest not you mine oxen, you little pretty boy?

ANONYMOUS (early English)
1. **Great Things**

Sweet cyder is a great thing,
A great thing to me,
Spinning down to Weymouth town
By Ridgway thirstily,
And maid and mistress summoning
Who tend the hostelry:
O cyder is a great thing,
A great thing to me!
The dance it is a great thing,
A great thing to me,
With candles lit and partners fit
For night-long revelry.
And going home when day-dawning
Peeps pale upon the lea:
O dancing is a great thing,
A great thing to me!

Love is, yea, a great thing,
A great thing to me,
When, having drawn across the lawn
In darkness silently,
A figure flits like one a-wing
Out from the nearest tree:
O love is, yes, a great thing,
Aye, greatest thing to me!
Will these be always great things
Greatest things to me? . . .
Let it befall that one will call
"Soul, I have need of thee":
What then? Joy-jaunts, impassioned flings,
Love, and its ecstasy
Will always have been great things,
Greatest things to me!

THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928)

2. **Earth's Call (A Sylvan Rhapsody)**

The fresh air moves like water round a boat.
The white clouds wander. Let us wander too.
The whining, wavering plover flap and float.
That crow is flying after that cuckoo.
Look! Look! . . . they're gone. What are the great trees calling?
Just come a little farther, by that edge
Of green, to where the stormy ploughland, falling
Wave upon wave, is lapping to the hedge.
Oh, what a lovely bank! Give me your hand.
Lie down and press your heart against the ground.
Let us both listen till we understand
Each through the other, every natural sound . . .
I can't hear anything today, can you,
But, far and near: 'Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo!'

HAROLD MONRO (1879-1932)
**Hope the Hornblower**

“Hark ye, hark to the winding horn;
Huntsman, huntsman, whither away?
Sluggards awake, and from the morn!
What is the quarry afoot today?
Hark ye, hark to the winding horn;
Huntsman, huntsman, whither away,
The sun’s on meadow and mill,
And what the game ye kill?
Follow me, hearts that love the chase;
Is it the deer, that men may dine’?
Follow me, feet that keep the pace:
Is it the wolf that tears the kine?
Stirrup to stirrup we ride, we ride,
What is the race ye ride, ye ride,
We ride by moor and hill.”
Ye ride by moor and hill?

“Ask not yet till the day be dead
What is the game that’s forward fled,
Ask not yet till the day be dead
The game we follow still.
An echo it may be, floating past;
A shadow it may be, fading fast:
Shadow or echo, we ride, we ride
We ride by moor and hill.”

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT (1862-1938)
COMPACT DISC TWO

SONGS OF A WAYFARER

1. Memory

Memory, hither come
And tune your merry notes;
And while upon the wind
Your music floats,
I’ll pore upon the stream,
Where sighing lovers dream,
And fish for fancies as they pass
Within the watery glass.

I’ll drink of the clear stream,
And hear the linnet’s song,
And there I’ll lie and dream
The day along;
And when night comes I’ll go
To places fit for woe,
Walking along the darkened valley,
With silent melancholy.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827)

2. When daffodils begin to peer

When daffodils begin to peer –
With heigh! The doxy over the dale –
Why, then comes in the sweet o’ the year;
For the red blood reigns in the winter’s pale.
The white sheet bleaching on the hedge –
With heigh! The sweet birds, O how they sing!
Doth set my pugging tooth on edge;
For a quart of ale is a dish for a king.

The lark, that tirra-lirra chants,
With heigh! with heigh! The thrush and the jay,
Are summer songs for me and my aunts,
While we lie tumbling in the hay.
But shall I go mourn for that, my dear?
The pale moon shines by night:
And when I wander here and there,
I then do most go right.

Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,
And merrily hent the stile-a:
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616)
[3] English May

Would God your health were as this month of May
Should be, were this not England, – and your face
Abroad, to give the gracious sunshine grace
And laugh beneath the budding hawthorn-spray.
But here the hedgerows pine from green to grey
While yet May’s lyre is tuning, and her song
Is weak in shade that should in sun be strong;
And your pulse springs not to so faint a lay.
If in my life be breath of Italy,
Would God that I might yield it all to you!
So, when such grafted warmth had burgeonied through
The languor of your Maytime’s hawthorn-tree,
My spirit at rest should walk unseen and see
The garland of your beauty bloom anew.
DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828-1882)

[4] I was not sorrowful (Spleen)

I was not sorrowful, I could not weep,
And all my memories were put to sleep.
I watched the river grow more white and strange,
All day till evening I watched it change.
All day till evening I watched the rain
Beat wearily upon the window pane.
And left me sorrowful, inclined to weep,
With all my memories that could not sleep.
ERNEST DOWSON (1867-1900)

[5] I will walk on the earth

Up to the top o’ the trees,
Where sway the bird and the breeze,
And Song’s wild eyes
Look to the skies:
Up to the top o’ the trees,
Up to the top o’ the trees!
Up to the peaks o’ the cloud,
Where Echo’s suburbs crowd
The lightning’s flash
And thund’rous crash:
Up to the peaks o’ the cloud,
Up to the peaks o’ the cloud!
37
Nay, I will walk on the earth;
My love them all is worth:
In Love I see
All of them be,
And more – more –
I will walk on the earth,
I will walk on the earth!
JAMES VILA BLAKE

[6] Ladslove

Look not in my eyes, for fear
They mirror true the sight I see,
And there you find your face too clear
And love it and be lost like me.
One the long nights through must lie
Spent in star-defeated sighs,
But why should you as well as I
Perish? Gaze not in my eyes.

A Grecian lad, as I hear tell,
One that many loved in vain,
Looked into a forest well
And never looked away again.
There, when the turf in springtime flowers,
With downward eye and gazes sad,
Stands amid the glancing showers
A jonquil, not a Grecian lad.

A E HOUSMAN (1859-1936)

[7] The Heart's Desire

The boys are up the woods with day
To fetch the daffodils away,
And home at noonday from the hills
They bring no dearth of daffodils.

In farm and field through all the shire
The eye beholds the heart's desire;
Ah, let not only mine be vain,
For lovers should be loved again.

A E HOUSMAN (1859-1936)
[8] When I am dead, my dearest
When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree;
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.
I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

“What art thou thinking of,” said the mother.
“What art thou thinking of, my child?”
“I am thinking of heaven,” he answered her,
And looked up in her face and smiled.
“And what didst thou think of heaven?” she said:
‘Tell me, my little one.’
“Oh I thought that there the flowers never fade,
That there never sets the sun.”
“And wouldst thou love to go thither, my child,
Thither wouldst thou love to go,
And leave the pretty flowers that wither,
And the sun that sets below?”
“Oh I would be glad to go there, mother,
To go and live there now;
And I would pray for thy coming, mother;
My mother wouldst thou? wouldst thou?”
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

[10] During Music
O cool unto the sense of pain
That last night’s sleep could not destroy;
O warm unto the sense of joy,
That dreams it’s life within the brain.
What though I lean o’er thee to scan
The written music cramped and stiff;
’Tis dark to me, as hieroglyph
On those weird bulks Egyptian.
But as from those, dumb now and strange,
A glory wanders on the earth,
Even so thy tones can call a birth
From these, to shake my soul with change.
O swift, as in melodious haste
Float o’er the keys thy fingers small.
O soft, as is the rise and fall
Which stirs that shade within thy breast.
DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828-1882)
MOTHER AND CHILD

[1] Newborn
Your brother has a falcon,
Your sister has a flower,
But what is left for mannikin,
Born within an hour?
I'll nurse you on my knee, my knee,
My own little son;
I'll rock you, rock you, in my arms,
My least little one.
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

[2] The Only Child
Crying, my little one, footsore and weary?
Fall asleep, pretty one, warm on my shoulder:
I must tramp on through the winter night dreary,
While the snow falls on me, colder and colder.
You are my one, and I have not another;
Sleep soft, my darling, my trouble and treasure;
Sleep warm and soft in the arms of your mother,
Dreaming of pretty things, dreaming of pleasure.
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

[3] Hope
I dug and dug amongst the snow,
And thought the flowers would never grow;
I dug and dug amongst the sand,
And still no green thing came to hand.
Melt, o snow! the warm winds blow
To thaw the flowers and melt the snow;
But all the winds from every land
Will rear no blossom from the sand.
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

[4] Skylark and Nightingale
When a mounting skylark sings
In the sunlit summer morn,
I know that heaven is up on high,
And on earth are fields of corn.
But when a nightingale sings
In the moonlit summer even,
I know not if earth is merely earth,
Only that heaven is heaven.
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

40
The Blind Boy

Blind from my birth,
Where flowers are springing
I sit on earth
All dark.
Hark! hark!
A lark is singing,
His notes are all for me.
For me his mirth:
Till some day I shall see
Beautiful flowers
And birds in bowers
Where all joy-bells are ringing.
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

Baby

Love me, – I love you,
Love me, my baby;
Sing it high, sing it low,
Sing it as may be.

Mother’s arms under you,
Her eyes above you;
Sing it high, sing it low,
Love me, – I love you.
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)
Death-parting

“Good-bye in fear, good-bye in sorrow,
Good-bye, and all in vain,
Never to meet again, my dear” –
“Never to part again.”

“Good-bye today, good-bye tomorrow,
Good-bye till earth shall wane,
Never to meet again, my dear” –
“Never to part again.”

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)

The Garland

Roses blushing red and white,
For delight;
Honeysuckle wreaths above,
For love;
Dim sweet-scented heliotrope,
For hope;
Shining lilies tall and straight,
For royal state;
Dusky pansies, let them be
For memory;
With violets of fragrant breath,
For death.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)
The Vagabond

Dunno a heap about the what and why,
Can’t say’s I ever knowed.
Heaven to me’s a fair blue stretch of sky,
Earth’s jest a dusty road.
Dunno the names o’ things, nor what they are,
Can’t say’s I ever will.
Dunno about God – he’s jest the noddin’ star
Atop the windy hill.

Dunno about Life – it’s jest a tramp alone,
From wakin’-time to doss.
Dunno about Death – it’s jest a quiet stone
All over-grey wi’ moss.
An’ why I live, an’ why the old world spins,
Are things I never knowed.
My mark’s the gypsy fires, the lonely inns,
An’ jest the dusty road.

JOHN MASEFIELD (1878-1967)

The Bells of San Marie

It’s pleasant in Holy Mary
By San Marie lagoon,
The bells they chime and jingle
From dawn to afternoon.
They rhyme and chime and mingle,
They pulse and boom and beat,
And the laughing bells are gentle
And the mournful bells are sweet.

It’s pleasant in Holy Mary
To hear the beaten bells
Come booming into music,
Which throbs, and clangs, and swells.
From sunset till the daybreak,
From dawn to afternoon,
In port of Holy Mary
On San Marie Lagoon.

JOHN MASEFIELD (1878-1967)
Sea Fever

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel’s kick and the wind’s song and the white sail’s shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea’s face and a grey dawn breaking.
I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume and the seagulls crying.
I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull’s way and the whale’s way where the wind’s like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick’s over.

JOHN MASEFIELD (1878-1967)

The Journey

Do you see the road a-winding through the dear green fields below?
Hear the bridle-bells a-jingle on the horses as they go?
Then beside blue flashing rivers, where the tall reeds softly sing
Plaintive songs of weary Autumn, lyric carollings of Spring.
Down the sloped wild pines rush headlong, tossing each his ragged plume,
Plunging all its life and glory in a shadowland of gloom;
But the shadows are but shadows. Hark! the bells are jingling still;
See, it ends the journey, mounting where the sunlight’s on the hill.

ERNEST BLAKE

Bed in Summer

In winter I get up at night, I have to go to bed and see
And dress by yellow candle light. The birds still hopping on the tree,
And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue, Or hear the grown-up people’s feet
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-1894)
FIVE XVIth- CENTURY POEMS

[24] A Thanksgiving

Pleasure it is
To hear, iwis
The birdes sing.
The deer in the dale,
The sheep in the vale,

The corn springing.
God's purveyance
For sustenance

It is for man.
Then we always
To Him give praise,

And thank Him then,
And thank Him then.

WILLIAM CORNISH (c1465-1523)

2 All in a garden green

Whenas the mildest month
Of jolly June doth spring,
And gardens green with happy hue
Their famous fruits do bring;
When eke the lustiest time
Reviveth youthly blood,
Then springs the finest featured flower
In border fair that stood.
Which moveth me to say.
In time of pleasant year.
Of all the pleasant flowers in June
The red rose hath no peer.

THOMAS HOWELL (fl1568-1581)
These women all
Both great and small
Are wavering to and fro,
Now here, now there,
Now everywhere;
But I will not say so.
So they love to range,
Their minds doth change
And make their friend their foe;
As lovers true
Each day they choose new;
But I will not say so.

28 An Aside

They laugh, they smile,
They do beguile
As dice that men doth throw.
Who useth them much
Shall never be rich;
But I will not say so.
Some hot, some cold,
There is no hold
But as the wind doth blow;
When all is done,
They change like the moon;
But I will not say so.

So thus one and other
Takeeth after their mother,
As cock by kind doth crow.
My song is ended.
The best may be amended;
But I will not say so.

ANONYMOUS

A Report Song

Shall we go dance the hay, the hay?
Never pipe could ever play
Better shepherd's roundelay.
Shall we go sing the song, the song?
Never Love did ever wrong.
Fair maids, hold hands all along.

Thus at base they run, they run
When the sport was scarce begun.
But I waked, and all was done.

NICHOLAS BRETON (c1545-c1626)
The Sweet Season

When May is in his prime, then may each heart rejoice.
When May bedecks each branch with green, each bird strains forth his voice
The lively sap creeps up into the blooming thorn.
The flowers, which cold in prison kept, now laugh the frost to scorn.
All nature’s imps triumph while joyful May doth last;
When May is gone, of all the year the pleasant time is past.

May makes the cheerful hue, May breeds and brings new blood.
May marcheth throughout every limb, May makes the merry mood.
May prieketh tender hearts their warbling notes to tune.
Full strange it is, yet some we see do make their May in June.
Thus things are strangely wrought while joyful May doth last;
Take May in time, when May is gone the pleasant time is past.

All ye that live on earth, and have your May at will
Rejoice in May, as I do now, and use your May with skill.
Use May while that you may, for May hath but his time
When all the fruit is gone, it is too late the tree to climb.
Your liking and your lust is fresh while May doth last;
When May is gone, of all the year the pleasant time is past.

RICHARD EDWARDES (1523-1566)

The Sacred Flame

Thy hand in mine, thy hand in mine,
And through the world we two will go,
With love before us for a sign,
Our faces set to ev’ry foe.

My heart in thine, my heart in thine,
Through life, through happy death the same.
We two will kneel before the shrine,
And keep alight the sacred flame.

MARY COLERIDGE (1861-1907)
Remember

Time brought me many another friend
That loved me longer.
New love was kind, but in the end
Old love was stronger.

Years come and go. No New Year yet
Hath slain December.
And all that should have cried “Forget!”
Cries but “Remember!”

MARY COLERIDGE (1861-1907)

THREE SONGS

Love and Friendship

Love is like the wild rose-briar,
Friendship like the holly-tree —
The holly is dark when the rose-briar blooms,
But which will bloom most constantly?

The wild rose-briar is sweet in spring,
It’s summer blossoms scent the air.
Yet wait till winter comes again
And who will call the wild-briar fair?

Then scorn the silly rose-wreath now
And deck thee with the holly’s sheen,
That when December blights thy brow
He still may leave thy garland green.

EMILY BRONTÉ (1818-1848)

Friendship in Misfortune

Give me the depth of love that springs
From friendship in misfortune grown,
As ivy to the ruin clings
When every other hope has flown.

Give me that fond confiding love
That nought but death itself can blight;
A flame that slander cannot move.
But burns in darkness doubly bright.

ANONYMOUS
The One Hope

When vain desire at last and vain regret
Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,
What shall assuage the unforgotten pain
And teach the unforgettable to forget?
Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long unmet,
Or may the soul at once in a green plain
Stoop through the spray of some sweet life-fountain
And curl the dew-drenched flowering amulet?
Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air
Between the scriptured petals softly blown
Peers breathless for the gift of grace unknown,—
Ah! let none other alien spell soe’er.
But only the one Hope’s one name be there,—
Not less nor more, but even that word alone.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828-1882)

WE’LL TO THE WOODS NO MORE

We’ll to the woods no more
The laurels all are cut,
The bowers are bare of bay
That once the Muses wore.
The year draws in the day
And soon will evening shut:
The laurels all are cut
We’ll to the woods no more.
Oh, we’ll no more, no more
To the leafy woods away,
To the high wild woods of laurel
And the bowers of bay no more.

A E HOUSMAN (1859-1936)
In Boyhood

When I would muse in boyhood
The wild green woods among,
And nurse resolves and fancies
Because the world was young,
It was not foes to conquer,
Nor sweethearts to be kind,
But it was friends to die for
That I would seek and find.

I sought them far and found them,
The sure, the straight, the brave,
The hearts I lost my own to,
The souls I could not save,
They braced their belts about them,
They crossed in ships the sea,
They sought and found
Six feet of ground,
And there they died for me.

A E HOUSMAN (1859-1936)

Spring will not wait for solo piano

When lights go rolling round the sky
Then up my heart, then ope mine eye,
With Molly and Polly,
And John so jolly –
Away say we, with melancholy,
Heigh-ho and heigh-ho,
For me, for me’s no melancholy.

First rolls the sun in rosy morn,
And wheels away what e’er’s forlorn:
Then look I to my Molly,
And, certes, John to Polly –
To each the girl, the love, the wife,
A rosy morn of rosy life:
And so, and so, O ho, O ho,

When moves the early moon a-west,
We say the vesper time is best;
And then lead I my Molly,
And cometh John with Polly
To sweet sequestered willow shade.
For such dear girls and lovers made:
And so, and so, O ho, O ho,

JAMES VILA BLAKE
LISA MILNE

This young Scottish soprano (she was born in Aberdeen) studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama with Patricia McMahon and has won numerous awards and prizes, most notably the 1993 Maggie Teyte Prize and the 1996 John Christie Award. She made her professional debut on the opera stage as Giannetta in Scottish Opera’s production of *L’Elisir d’Amore*. In 1994/5 she took up a three-season principal contract with Scottish Opera. She has also appeared with Welsh National Opera (as Servilia), the Stuttgart Opera (Gretel) and at the Gottingen Handel Festival as Atalanta in *Xerxes*.

Miss Milne made her London recital début at the Maggie Teyte Prizewinner’s Concert at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and has since given recitals at the Aix-en-Provence, City of London and Edinburgh Festivals. She has sung with The Gabrieli Consort, the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, the Scottish Chamber, Royal Philharmonic, London Philharmonic and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestras.

Lisa Milne made her recording début on Hyperion singing Handel and Vivaldi cantatas with The King’s Consort. Her first solo recording of a selection of Marjory Kennedy-Fraser’s *Songs of the Hebrides* was greeted by *The Sunday Times* reviewer as ‘as fine a solo début album as I have encountered all year’.
JOHN MARK AINSLEY

Since leaving Oxford in 1985, John Mark Ainsley has established a reputation as one of Britain’s most exciting singers of the new generation. In 1990 he made his American début with concerts in New York and Boston and has subsequently appeared with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1993 he made his début in the Vienna Musikverein, singing the ‘St Matthew’ and ‘St John’ Passions under Peter Schreier. Subsequent engagements have included appearances with the London Philharmonic under Norrington, the London Symphony (Sir Colin Davis), Les Musiciens du Louvre (Minkowski), the Berlin Philharmonic (Haitink and Rattle), the New York Philharmonic (Masur) and both the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and the Orchestre de Paris under Giulini.

His first solo disc was for Hyperion for whom he has since recorded a series of recital records of music by Schubert, Mozart, Purcell, Grainger, Warlock and Quilter.

John Ainsley’s early operatic engagements included Idamante with the Welsh National Opera, Fenton with Scottish Opera, and Don Ottavio at the Aix-en-Provence and Glyndebourne Festivals. In 1995 he made his début in San Francisco as Don Ottavio. In 1996 he sang for the first time with the Netherlands Opera as Orfeo. 1997 saw his débuts in Sydney as Tito and in Munich as Idamante. This year he returns to Aix-en-Provence to sing Don Ottavio in Peter Brook’s new production of Don Giovanni conducted by Claudio Abbado. In 1999 he sings Orfeo at the Munich Festival.
CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN

Winner of the Lieder Prize at the 1997 Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, Christopher Maltman read biochemistry at Warwick University and studied singing at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Recent concert engagements have included Beethoven’s Symphony No 9 with the Philharmonia Orchestra and both Leonard Slatkin and Sir Yehudi Menuhin, Vaughan Williams’s A Sea Symphony in the Royal Albert Hall with Vernon Handley, Vaughan Williams’s Serenade to Music with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Sir Simon Rattle and Schubert’s Stabat Mater at the Hohenems Festival with Peter Schreier.

He has recorded for several major record labels and recently completed a disc of English orchestral songs for Hyperion.

Christopher Maltman recently made his recital debuts at the Chatelet in Paris, the Edinburgh and Hohenems Festivals and at the Wigmore Hall. Future recital engagements include his return to the Edinburgh and Hohenems Festivals and his debut appearances at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam and Carnegie Hall, New York.

Christopher Maltman is a member of English National Opera.

GRAHAM JOHNSON

After arriving in Britain from his native Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Graham Johnson studied at London’s Royal Academy of Music and subsequently with the late Geoffrey Parsons. In 1972 he was official accompanist at Peter Pears’s first masterclasses at The Maltings, Snape, and thereafter worked regularly with the great tenor. In 1975 he was invited by Walter Legge to accompany Elisabeth Schwarzkopf. In 1976 he formed The Songmakers’ Almanac to further the cause of neglected areas of piano-accompanied vocal music. This endeavour was much supported by the late Gerald Moore, whose guiding influence in Johnson’s career was of crucial importance.
Graham’s ten-year project to record the entire Schubert Lieder for Hyperion continues to attract critical acclaim, including the Gramophone Solo Vocal Award in both 1989 (for his disc with Dame Janet Baker) and 1996 (for ‘Die schöne Müllerin’ with Ian Bostridge); He has also now embarked on a project for Hyperion to record the entire Lieder of Schumann. The first disc in the series, with Christine Schäfer, won the 1997 Gramophone Solo Vocal Award.

Graham Johnson was awarded an OBE in the 1994 Queen’s Birthday Honours list.

Apart from devising and accompanying over one hundred and fifty Songmakers’ recitals, Graham Johnson has presented a number of summer recital cycles for London’s South Bank and Wigmore Hall, as well as a seven-part cycle of Goethe settings for the Alte Oper, Frankfurt. He has written and presented programmes for both BBC Radio and Television on the songs of Schubert, Poulenc, Liszt and Shostakovich. He is Professor of Accompaniment at London’s Guildhall School of Music, and a Fellow of that School as well as of the Royal Academy of Music. He has given masterclasses as far afield as Finland, New Zealand, and the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California.

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Some years after his death, a trust was formed to promote awareness of Ireland’s music through recordings, performances and publications. Further information is available from The John Ireland Trust, 35 St Mary’s Mansions, St Mary’s Terrace, London W2 1SQ, England (telephone 0171 723 6376; fax 0171 724 8362).

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