



## To God & Other Poems

*Ivor Gurney*

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Ivor Bertie Gurney was born in Gloucester on 28th August 1890. A chorister at Gloucester cathedral Ivor began to compose music at 14 before winning a scholarship to the Royal Academy Of Music in 1911. Noted for his enormous potential he was equally thought by many to be un-teachable. His studies were interrupted by World War I and his enlistment with the Gloucestershire Regiment. He was wounded in April 1917 and gassed a few months later. After his release from hospital he was posted to Seaton Delaval, a mining village in Northumberland. His first volume of poetry, *Severn and Somme*, being published in November 1917, followed by *War's Embers* in 1919. Unfortunately his life was blighted by bi-polar disorder which had developed from his mid teens and culminated in his first major breakdown whilst still in uniform in 1918. The trigger was a failed relationship with Annie Drummond. After the war he seemed to thrive for a while but the bi-polar return with increasing severity in 1922 to the point where he was declared insane. Although he continued to write poems and a few pieces of music he was to spend the next fifteen years of his life until his death in various mental hospitals. Ivor Gurney died on 26th December 1937.

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