

Correspondence with Gladys Dawe

1. Hotel Henri IV, Pau, Basses Pyrenees, France; 21 Dec 1913

Dear Gladys,

I think I must send you a word to tell you that at the English Church here we had this evening Burnett, for the Canticles. I preached. I find that in the parish churches, it is very different from the Cathedrals. These latter are like old fossils. I went in the afternoon today to St. Martin's parish church and it was another thing altogether to the three cathedrals we have been at. For the psalms and Magnificat, the people sang one verse in plainsong, 1 st tune 1 st ending, 5th tune, and Peregrine tune, and the Magnificat to the Royal tune, and the choir and organ in the West gallery the 2nd, 4th, 6th etc. verses and any fauxbourdon and the effect was superb. I am going to try and get a set of fauxbourdons here, if I can. We have had superb weather and the distant view of the Pyrenees wrapped in snow is surpassingly beautiful. Remember me to your father and mother.

Yours truly

S. Baring-Gould

P.S. I enclose a photo of the English chapel here.

2. 4 Jan 1914

Dear Gladys,

Will you most kindly for me copy out our four original fauxbourdons for Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis - not the last Mr. Whitmell made for 1 do not care for it; and put them in the enclosed envelope and send it off by post to the organist of St. Martin's Church at Pau. He has promised to send me some of those used there if I will send him our few fauxbourdons, which will be a good exchange. Mr. Gatrill and I cross over tomorrow, and I shall post them on Sunday.

I am very well and hope to be home during the week, but have to be two or three days in town to see my publisher and other business.

Mr. Gatrill has been unwell and this has necessitated my coming home earlier than I anticipated, as I could not let him travel alone. He came to look after me, but as it happens I have had to look after him.

1 remain,

Yours truly

S. Baring-Gould

3. Lew Trenchard, N. Devon; 17 Jan. 1919

My dear Gladys,

I have not been able to get over to see you and your dear husband and children for a long time. Do not think that you are out of my thoughts and my heart; but I am not able to get about as formerly. For one thing I am confined to my room during the wet weather. I shall shortly be in my 86th year, and am not able to go round the parish as I should wish. I do not know that my life is worth much, but I generally get laid up with bronchitis for several months in the winter, and am obliged to keep much indoors to avoid a recurrence of this my trouble.

But do not think that I forget you and yours. No! not for a day. When I am gone - when it pleases God to call me, I trust that some of you - my very, very dear people will continue in the love of God and loyalty to his Church, which have been the two things I have ever tried to teach you. So do not think it is neglect on my part, only the infirmity of age.

I remain,

Yours truly

S Baring-Gould

4. Lew Trenchard, N. Devon; 17 Jan. 1920

My dear Gladys,

I ought to have written to you before to thank you for your sweet letter. I cannot express to you how much such a kind letter comforts me.

I feel, as I am now on the verge of Eternity so humbled and ashamed at the little I have done for God, that my heart aches and I feel crushed with shame, thinking how little I have done.

My dear child, when I came into this ministry everything - farms, cottages, Lew House - were in rack and ruin, and the property was so burdened with annuities, that I had to write night and day to make money to put things to rights. And in my care for the welfare of the people I could do little for their souls. And now, in my old age, tottering on the edge of the grave, I feel how little I have done, and I feel so humbled, yet when I get from you and others so kind a letter, it cheers me up, and I hope that when I stand before the throne of God, your dear vision* may prevail and He will receive me into his everlasting kingdom.

You have ever been most precious to me.

**vision seems the most likely; the word could be 'views' or 'wishes'. The ending of the letter has not been copied.*

These are transcripts of photocopies kindly made available by a member, Wesley Colwill; No. 3 is reproduced on p.9; some words in No. 1 especially are difficult to decipher. Fauxbourdon is a system of alternative harmonisation, originating on the Continent. A pencilled note adds: "Gladys Dawe played the organ at Lew Trenchard for 20 years. Her father was schoolmaster at Cross Road School, Lewdown for 33 years."

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