

# **Selected poems**

**Lorna Lloyd**



compiled and edited by  
Bruce Ryan and Hazel Hall

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# Contents

<b>Lorna Lloyd: poet, war diarist, star of Blipfoto</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>About Lorna Beatrice Lloyd (1914-1942)</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>1928 to 1930</b>	<b>9</b>
One friend to another.....	10
Smiles and tears .....	11
Footsteps.....	12
The battlefields of France .....	13
The outcast .....	14
Stick it!.....	15
Snow .....	16
Time.....	17
If.....	18
A fragment.....	19
The fallen leader .....	20
<b>Early 1930s</b>	<b>21</b>
L'Envoi .....	22
Constancy .....	23
Looking forward .....	24
To a materialist.....	24
A pagan song .....	25
A warning .....	26
De profundis.....	26
Dusk.....	27
Fate.....	28
For the nobodies .....	29
My lady plays .....	30
<b>Mid to late 1930s</b>	<b>31</b>
Coming down.....	32
A slight satire on a great game .....	34
'Ymn of 'Ate or Ballade of concentrated venom.....	35
Lines to a member of A form doing prep .....	36
Bowler hats.....	37
To my mother .....	38
Anthem for the dictators .....	39
Presents for my aunt.....	40
Resurgent .....	41
Untitled song .....	42
<b>Early 1940s</b>	<b>43</b>
Pan's Song.....	44
Pietà.....	45
1938 to 1929 .....	46
Sonnet .....	47
Untitled spring poem.....	48



# Lorna Lloyd: poet, war diarist, star of Blipfoto

Bruce Ryan and Hazel Hall

Lorna Beatrice Lloyd's poetry came to light in an interesting way. After her death in 1942 aged 28, Lorna's family saved many of her creative outputs in folders and boxes. The first guardians of most of the archive were her parents. They took care of it until their deaths in 1959. Lorna's brother looked after it in the 1960s and 1970s. Following his death in 1981, the material was split between Lorna's brother's two children, Lorna's nephew and niece. In July 2019, Lorna's nephew showed some of Lorna's writing to his own nephew's wife, Hazel Hall. Hazel soon became very interested in Lorna and her short life. Of the opinion that Lorna's work deserved a larger audience, Hazel was determined to discover more about this talented (but unpublished) writer, and sought a means of disseminating her work.

With the permission from the rest of the family, in September 2019, Hazel started an online journal to showcase Lloyd's writing about living in the Worcestershire town of Malvern during the early months of World War II. This can be found at <https://www.blipfoto.com/LornaL>. To fill the gaps between the entries in Lorna's **Diary of the war**, Hazel uploaded samples of Lorna's artwork and poetry, photographs of her family, and other ephemera, from the archive.

As Professor of Social Informatics at Edinburgh Napier University, Hazel's main research interest is online information sharing. While observing the reactions of readers to the online journal, she wondered whether audience engagement with Lorna's work as a digital archive would differ depending on its digitised format.

With funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Creative Informatics programme, Hazel and two other colleagues from the School of Computing at Edinburgh Napier University were able to explore this research question by reproducing Lorna's **Diary of the war** as a podcast series, and then undertaking qualitative research with people familiar with the content in both textual and audio formats.

This project, entitled **Platform to platform**, was led by Dr Bruce Ryan, a Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Social Informatics. The third staff member was sound design expert Dr Iain McGregor. Iain supervised a team of five third year undergraduate students -

Alex Gencs, David Graham, James McLachlan, Andras Peter, and Michael Suttie – in the assembly of twelve podcast episodes: eight to cover the **Diary of the war**, and four ‘bonus’ episodes of poetry. Links to the podcast series are available from the web site of the Malvern Museum of Local History: <https://malvernmuseum.co.uk>.

Additional project funding from Edinburgh Napier University allowed the project team to create this booklet of the poetry selected for the bonus episodes of the podcast series. Our selection includes Lorna’s writing from the age of 14 on broad themes such as war, love and nature, and a diversity of other topics including sport, head attire, packing, and the frustrations of a school mistress. The dominant theme of the final poems is death and regret of a life cut tragically short. We hope that readers enjoy engaging with Lorna’s work in this third format: print.

### **Acknowledgements**

The **Platform to platform** project team members gratefully acknowledge the Creative Informatics Programme (AHRC) and Edinburgh Napier University for funding their work. They are also indebted to the BBC Archive and the British Newspaper Archive (British Library and FindMyPast) for their support of the project. In addition, we thank the many individuals who have been involved in the production of the podcast series and this booklet of poetry, especially: Sarah Ames, Louise Ashton, Marjorie Baillie, Catherine Banks, Gillian Barrington\*, Jake Berger, Sandra Cairncross, Grant Cassidy, David Darlington, Sue Dumbleton, Emma Gibbs, Richard Godden, Ingi Helgason, Jonathan Lloyd\*, Gillian Moloney\*, David Monteath, Paul Nixon, Nicola Osborne, Inge Panneels, Guy Puzey\*, Bethany Ray\*, Tim Read\*, Faith Renger, Mandy Sims, Kerstin Steiner, Katherine Stephen, Adrian Woolard, Marianne Wilson, and Stella Wisdom.

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# About Lorna Beatrice Lloyd (1914-1942)

Hazel Hall

Lorna Beatrice Lloyd was an unpublished writer, amateur artist, and school mistress.

Lorna was born in Filton, Bristol on 7th January 1914. Over the course of her childhood, Lorna lived with her parents and elder brother in Bristol, Stirling, Ilford, and Sheffield. In Lorna's earliest years her father was absent while serving in World War I.

Lorna was lucky to have been born into a family that was relatively wealthy at the start of the twentieth century, and continued to be so throughout her short life. Her parents were from families that benefited socially and economically in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Her maternal grandfather began his career as a railway clerk in Yorkshire; he ended it as a banker and stockbroker in Bristol, and a friend of King Peter I of Serbia. Lorna's paternal grandfather's first job was as an errand boy for his journeyman fishmonger father; by the time of Lorna's birth, he ran a chain of fishmongers across five locations in Bristol. The family retail business passed down the generations and is still in existence today, although it no longer deals in fish. Lloyds Greengrocer trades in Henleaze, Bristol.

In the 1911 census, Lorna's father was described as a man of 'private means'. Following World War I he went into business as an iron and steel merchant. He retired in 1935, but returned to active service in 1940. This made World War II his third war after the Second Boer War and World War I. Like married women of her class at the time, Lorna's mother did not undertake paid work.

Lorna's privileged middle-class childhood afforded leisure time and resources to develop various talents. She played the piano; she wrote short stories, plays and poetry; she drew and painted; she designed costumes for theatrical performances; and she wrote, read and spoke French. Lorna's childhood passions were books, dogs and boats, all of which she enjoyed on family holidays in Looe, Cornwall with her parents and brother, and the Lloyd grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins.

Lorna undertook her secondary schooling first at Ilford Hall High School, then at Sheffield High School for Girls. Academically gifted, she left home in 1933 to study at Girton College, Cambridge, supported by a prestigious State Scholarship. She read for a BA in English in 1936. However, she did not graduate: the University of Cambridge did not award degrees to women in the 1930s. At Girton College, Lorna was an active member of the Dramatic Society as a producer, designer and actor, and a member of the Debating Society.

Lorna's first job was part-time English Mistress at the County High School, Stourbridge (1936-37), and her second was Assistant English Mistress at the Royal School, Bath (circa 1937-39). However, her teaching career was cut short due to illness. By 1939, the 25-year-old was once again living with her parents, now settled in Malvern. From here, Lorna was able to attend Gloucester Infirmary for medical treatment.

Sadly the treatment was unsuccessful. Lorna's condition worsened from mid-1940 onwards, and she died at her parents' house in Malvern on 2nd February 1942, soon after her 28th birthday. The cause of her death was cancer and heart failure.

### **Editors' note**

We have divided this booklet into sections to cover Lorna's poetry written from 1928 to 1930, in the early 1930s, in the mid- to late 1930s, and in the early 1940s. Because Lorna typed much of her poetry, we have set it in a matching font, American Typewriter.

## 1928 to 1930



## **One friend to another**

**6 December 1928**

Me thought I found amid the careless throng  
One such as I should wish my friend to be  
One, who would stand by me through right and wrong  
Friend! Thou'lt not fail when I have need of thee!

What tho' we be rivals, Let it be!  
Are not all men rivals? Is not life a race?  
The one true winner of life's race is he  
Who helps a fallen neighbour to a safer place

Not his the laurels on the victor's crown  
Not his the triumph or the pageantry  
The heavens themselves grant him a fairer crown  
Of love, patience, a sweet sympathy

If e're it be my chance to aid thee friend in part  
God let me do it with a loving heart

## **Smiles and tears**

**31 March 1929**

Why do men weep? With a world so full of sunshine?  
Why do men sigh? The earth is still so fair  
Why do men mourn for spent hopes and shatter'd dreams?  
The sun, the streams, and the hills are still there

How can men hate? Breathing the clear air  
Of heaven, seeing the sunset, hearing the roaring waves  
How can men fight? Waging their cruel wars  
Leaving a trail of ruin, tears and scattered graves?

Is life all tears? Nay, they're but April showers  
Sudden and fierce but soon spent and soon past  
Tho' grief come at night, joy cometh in the morning  
And our tears will be smiles when dawn comes at last

The whole world is not all tears and pain  
Our smiles are of God - like sunshine after rain

## **Footsteps**

18 May 1929

I heard the tread of many feet -  
Voices laughed and songs were sung;  
An army, it seemed, marched along the street,  
Who laughed and returned the jests that were flung.

I heard the tread of tired feet,  
Wax-worn and weary, home and sore.  
Were these the victors I'd hurried to meet?  
A few battered veterans returned from a war!

I heard the tread of feet once more.  
Footsteps left in the sands of time;  
Imprints on life's rocky shore,  
Of storms and battles unknown to rhyme.

The tread of feet has died away,  
Past are the sorrows, the hopes and fears  
Their songs are sung by nations today  
In a voice of praise half-choked by tears.

## **The battlefields of France**

**23 April 1929**

I, a child, have trod the hallowed ground  
Unknowingly gazed upon the things they knew  
Gazed on torn tree of shattered mound  
Where once the shrieking shrapnel flew  
I did not know, I did not understand  
Why these things were and whose the hand  
That tore all nature from a flow'ring land

I could not dream that men had fought and died  
Upon the very spot on which I stood  
Once decked with grass and daisies pied  
A pleasant field flanked by a shady wood  
Now the trees with shatter'd branches seem to ask  
"Lord, is it man's allotted task  
To spread out ruin like a hideous mask?"

Why did you leave us, oh men of our nation?  
Was it for England? That we may be free?  
Was there no other way, no arbitration  
To stop such work without such a fee?  
"Our lives were the price paid for your need  
That peace might be yours we had to bleed  
You reap in joy - but we sowed the seed"

They sowed the seed with bone, blood and sinew  
Each for his country, his home, and his wife  
They sowed it for hope and the breath that is in you  
That you might be free - for freedom is life  
Those who have died and sleep o'er the waves  
Send us this message that we may be brave  
"Stamp out all wars! Man is no slave!  
Strive for what's right. Christ triumphs o'er the grave"

## **The outcast**

**9 June 1929**

Men said he was a wastrel and a fool,  
They laughed to scorn the things he loved and sought;  
He was their jest, an all-unwilling tool,  
Mocked and derided, scorned and set at nought.

Soft were the tongues that drove him from his home  
Cruel the words that made him glad to go,  
The wind-tossed ship, the curling, rising foam  
Were balm to his aching heart's unspoken woe.

The fog was thick, the ship was sinking fast,  
He laughed at Death, there in the dark and the cold.

The boats were full, so with a laugh he fared  
bravely forth into the Great Unknown  
The tongues are stilled, his name forever spared,  
He, whom the world had scorned, has come into his own!

## **Stick it!**

10 December 1929

You may fight for life,  
In a world of strife  
And no one will think it grand;  
You may sink or swim  
If it's mud you're in  
And no one will understand;  
But it takes some grit  
To do your bit  
When the glamour and glory's gone,  
But there's Fame to be won  
When the Long Trick's done  
So stick it, my lad, hold on!

What's to be done  
When the world makes fun  
If you haven't a 'cuss' to your name?  
And they all make sport  
'Cos you're not their sort  
Too 'good' to take part in a game!  
You've got to fight  
For what's good and what's right  
There is plenty of good to be done  
So unsheath your sword  
In the sight of the Lord  
You are more than a man, my son!

## **Snow**

**April 1929**

We did not hear it as it fell  
So softly in the night,  
An angel kissed the sleeping world  
And spread its hills with white.  
It did not fall as does the rain  
All pitter, patter on the pane,  
But like a kiss it touched this spot;  
Touched, melted, and was soon forgot.

Beneath its pall so smooth and deep,  
Above the brown earth's head,  
It hushed the drowsy flowers to sleep  
And put the seeds to bed.  
It covered up the steps of Man,  
With dainty coverlets again,  
And then in the calm of night - alack  
The angel that sent it, stole it back!

## **Time**

15 April 1929

Thou art a thief, O Time, thou stealest all  
My Youth is fleeting every hour I live.  
What gifts have you for what I give to thee  
O fleeting spirit? What have you to give?

Time said:

“Down through the corridors that I have built,  
Empty and echoing like dismal vaults,  
Steal like pale thieves to trembling receivers  
The records of Man’s merits and his faults.  
I have no faults, no merits and no soul,  
I have no love, nor naught have I to rue,  
Think, before His throne that set me here,  
I am as precious in His eyes as you.  
I hasten on. I cannot backward fly  
But you ... have you not Memory?”

**If...**

**16 April 1929**

If thou wert wise, my love, I'd honour thee;  
If thou wert great I'd bend my knee in awe;  
But as thou art, my love, my only love,  
I love thee, dearest, even yet the more!  
If thou wert old, my love, I'd age with thee,  
Time should not part us nor the rolling years,  
If thou wert young, I would forget my age,  
And share with thee Youth's failings and its tears.

If thou wert gone, my love, and lost to me;  
If I'd to grope in this dark world alone,  
My task would be to find the way you'd passed,  
And with my feeble steps to follow thee.  
If Earth and Heaven like a gulf were thrown  
Between us, I would find thee out at last.

## **A fragment**

1 December 1930

Has anyone seen a heart,  
Once full of a noble scheme  
That somehow lost its way  
And relinquished its hold on a dream?  
Has anyone seen it please,  
Alone and full of pain  
Because its owner wants it back  
That she may dream again

## **The fallen leader**

**3 January 1930**

He sleeps  
Do not wake him!  
The trumpets and clarions still sound on the hill,  
He can do nothing ... best let him be still.  
Give him rest  
It is due to him.

He smiles ...  
In his slumber  
Are his dreams then so sweet?  
Do his thoughts fly to home his loved ones to greet?  
Is he happy  
I wonder?

They sleep ...  
Can none wake them?  
Will they not stir when they know he is free?  
If he were not dead would they sleep tranquilly?  
Are they dead?  
Can I not rouse them?

His men ...  
And all dead?  
What triumph, what majesty is there in Death!  
“What are you fighting for?” – to their last breath  
“To be free!”  
They answered.

## **Early 1930s**



## **L'Envoi**

**January 1931**

There's a whisper of evening in the meadows  
There's a sigh of the wind in the trees  
There's the blue of the dusk on the hill tops  
A blue haze fanned by a breeze

Each wild flower closes its petals  
Each tired bird wings to its nest  
God made each have an ending  
Because the weary need rest

The cows are lowing on the uplands  
The sheep are bleating in the fold -  
Who would have thought the song would end so swiftly?  
Who would have thought the tale so swift be told?

So ends the day of mortal toil and scheming  
So ends the book that someone made by dreaming

## **Constancy**

**25 February 1931**

Bind up thy hair, my bonny lass  
He'll come no more to thee  
Weep thou no more sad childish tears  
But spend thy smiles on me.

Why dost thou wait, my bonny lass?  
Five years have passed away  
And he's no nearer coming back  
Than he was yesterday.

If he should come again, said she,  
And find me wed elsewhere!  
Oh no I'll never dry my tears  
Nor ever bind my hair.

And when my back is bent with age  
And my eyes grown dim,  
When these black locks are white as snow  
I still will wait for him.

## **Looking forward**

**March 1931**

I wonder if, in a hundred years,  
Someone will find my writings dimmed with time  
And know my bitter longings and my fears  
And find a meaning in each uncouth rhyme.  
I wonder if they'll wonder how I looked  
And sigh and laugh quite tenderly, and then  
Set back my books on the forgotten shelf  
Where they have lain, and so forget again.  
I wonder if perhaps some smouldering spark  
Hidden away in an unlettered rhyme  
May help somebody groping in the dark  
As never was I able in my time.

## **To a materialist**

**4 September 1931**

You have grown old, but not because the years  
You own are many but because your heart  
Is old, and now, not all your tears  
Can win back what you lost nor even part.  
You have not followed Wisdom, Honour, Beauty,  
Nor sought for those dear arts that keep men young,  
Your steps are bent to riches and your heart  
Is breaking like a lute far over-strung,  
The path of riches, though the consummation  
of earthly dreams is like a mountain track  
Leading to Poverty of Heart and Desolation  
From which there's no escape, no turning back,  
No shunning then the path in life you chose,  
Where you have planted thorns ne'er blooms a rose!

## **A pagan song**

early 1930s

I sometimes think of all futile things  
That man has ever fashioned  
War comes first  
Pain and all sorrow are the gifts it brings  
And yet we seem to love this thing accursed

Both sides call down their very gods to witness  
That they, and they alone, are in the right  
And yet if that were so and both were honest  
There'd be no reason and no cause to fight

If both are right, then neither side can lose  
And neither win, therefore why fight at all?  
And both sides say the gods are on their side  
And yet one side must lose, one banner fall

It is perchance a ruse the gods employ  
They first make mad those whom they would destroy

## **A warning**

early 1930s

The softest blow may crack a crystal vase  
The lightest word may break a loving heart  
Peace, lest the sudden fierce outspoken word  
Should sunder things that were not meant to part

Thy scorn is like a sharp two-edged sword  
Thy tongue is like a red-hot searing brand  
Thou knows not what hangs upon your words  
Touch not the thing thou dost not understand

Do not judge, that men may not judge thee  
Give life to men that they may let you live  
Love truly and you will be loved by all  
Life has no greater gift that this to give

A word once said no tears can e'er recall  
Keep watch, lest with thy honey though dost mingle gall

## **De profundis**

early 1930s

Have you forgotten that you swore to me  
That you would keep my trust when I passed on?  
You cried that you would seize my falling banner  
And carry it on high when I was gone  
You are foresworn!

Your words are like wind  
Coming from nothing and to nothing fled  
You have locked up the words I charged you with  
Within your hearts, now I am dead  
I died for you

What! Shall I regret the blood I shed for you?  
Must I confess that you are worthless and the sacrifice was vain?  
Better be sunk in nothingness  
Forgotten: it is still grand to die  
Even for men who have forgotten me!

## **Dusk**

early 1930s

How blue it is tonight  
The trees with lacy leaves stand out against the sky  
And we can wander in the glowing dusk, and the flowers  
Just you and I

There is no bustle here  
No hateful noise  
No haste, only amid the trees the starlings sing their vespers  
Rocked by the sighing breeze

The twilight deepens and the twinkling stars  
Night's little candles one by one appear  
Shining alike on just and unjust  
On so much beauty and on so much that mars  
And on itinerant dreamers groping here  
With heads in heaven and their feet in dust

## **Fate**

early 1930s

Men are all puppets, king and knave alike  
Fate holds a sword poised in her hand to strike  
Men may struggle in vain, 'tis Fate that does the scheming  
Wise men waste their breath, and only fools go dreaming  
Take all Fate's gifts ere she snatches them away  
But build not castles on such rotten clay  
Proud kings of old have tampered with Fate's fire  
Till it consumed or dragged them in the mire  
Some died in battle, old age wore out another  
Like tired babes they crept to Earth, their mother  
And she in gentle arms buried them deep  
Unsung, forgotten, in a dreamless sleep

## **For the nobodies**

early 1930s

Lord, for the nobodies, I'll pray my prayer  
For those who fail, for those who come too late  
For those who strive and yet are never known  
Overshadowed as they are by all the great

Lord, I would not have beauty, wealth nor wit  
Kingdoms I would not, nor great tracts of land  
Rather I would a heart to know my friends  
Eyes to see, a friend to understand

Lord, as thou hearest such a child as I  
Writer of this unlettered trivial song  
Help me some day to be a somebody  
That I may help the nobodies along

## **My lady plays**

9 October 1932

You played as you have never played before,  
As though a god were piping in thine ear,  
A strain wherein was mingled love and fear,  
And the long roll of waves upon a moonlit shore,  
You played as though the love were in your breast  
of the great, wild and unforgotten things;  
As though you knew the glory of old kings  
And loved the pomp wherein their days were dressed.  
There was a sobbing echo in your strain  
as though you feared the song too soon must cease  
And creeping Time hush out your life as he has done  
The lives of those who, long ago, felt pain  
Lov'd and were loved, suffered or were at ease  
In the brave days when all the world was young.

## **Mid to late 1930s**



## Coming down

mid 1930s

Let me see  
I've got a cabin trunk  
A gramophone as well  
That'll mean a case of records  
And a Gladstone bag, oh hell!  
The train'll be quite chilly, I'd better take a rug  
And on the way, I'll settle down and get up quite a fug

I'd better take  
- my golf clubs  
- my skates  
- my ski-ing kit  
A little winter sporting  
Always keeps a fellow fit

Of course I'll have a suitcase  
With my shaving kit and things  
Smith can find me quite a handy one  
That one he always brings  
Then there's my umbrella, which must not be forgot  
That's the worst of the English climate  
It's sure to rain a lot  
And I'd better take a book box to look a bit like work  
It'll give a bad impression if I don't - they'll think I'm a shirk

This is sickening, there's my overcoat  
It won't go in the trunk  
If I'm ever going to catch that train  
I really have to bunk  
Thank heaven it's not summer and I don't have any bats  
But to any fool it's obvious that I cannot wear three hats

My hat!  
That's that  
I'm rather good at packing  
There's one thing lacking  
As human nature stands  
I've only got two hands  
Of course I'd have a taxi in quite a simple way  
If it were even likely that I could ever pay  
I can't catch a bus at Emma  
What an envious dilemma!

A worthier suggestion worms its way to me  
With all this pile of clobber, I shall never catch that train  
Since I am not ambidextrous nor an octopus I find  
I'll simply pack a toothbrush, and leave the rest behind

## **A slight satire on a great game**

mid 1930s

The other day I met a man  
I hadn't seen since term began  
He carried one arm in a sling  
And walking, limped like anything  
He wore a bandage round his head  
One eye was black, the other red!

I hailed him (I am never rude)  
With kindness and solicitude  
I took his arm, lest he should fall  
And propped him up against a wall  
'Now tell me, Blank, to me relate  
How you have got into this state

You might have been, I must be frank  
Run over by a fighting tank!'   
Brightly he smiled at my dismay  
And sought my terrors to allay  
'Oh no, not at all - He gave a shrug - By  
Jove, I've had a game of rugby!

I must say I felt rather blue  
And found the wall quite useful too  
Faintly in words he scarce could catch  
I asked if he had played a match  
From the excitement of the lad  
I rather gathered that he had

'You missed it! Heavens! What a sin!  
We had 'em cold! We did 'em in!'   
He seized my wrist and - can you doubt it?  
Began to tell me all about it.  
'It was like this' he gave a roar  
At half time there had been no score

In vain did the spectators cry  
For nobody had scored a try  
In vain did burst a cheering roll  
When suddenly like a bolt from the blue  
Our forward line went bursting through  
And then - I know you will be vexed  
I can't remember what came next'

## **'Ymn of 'Ate or Ballade of concentrated venom**

late 1930s

May you who have no shred of taste  
Be placed among the super-critical  
May all your conversation waste  
On those who only talk aesthetics  
May you be forced to teach Chinese  
On t'other side of the Atlantic  
To Yankees who speak Sinhalese  
Or Redskins who will drive you frantic

May you inherit pots of jam  
With empty bottles to enrich it  
May you be heard to murmur 'Damn!'  
By Tilly or Archdeacon Twitchett  
May Johny catch you singing flat  
Or imitating his best antic  
And may you sit on your new hat  
And spoil it, which will drive you frantic

In netball may you never thrive  
Your tennis racket strings go slack  
And may you wish you weren't alive  
When you get bunkered in school prac  
May Joyce when she puts out the light  
Detect from your room noise gigantic  
May you be haunted in the night  
By clanking chains that drive you frantic

Envoi

Princess, I hope your tadpoles die  
In circumstances unromantic  
And cursed be all the eggs you fry  
Oh, anything, to drive you frantic!

**Lines to a member of A form doing prep**

late 1930s

You are a nuisance, Barbara Smith,  
You're one I like not to be with.  
I hate your giggles, loath your smirks,  
You scorn to be a girl that works.  
You haven't done a stroke for hours,  
And nor have I, by all the powers.  
[Damn you.]

## **Bowler hats**

late 1930s

I hate a man who wears brown boots  
Disdains a pipe and smokes cheroots  
A double-breasted waistcoat fills  
Me with unfathomable ills  
Plus fours are not one of my bents  
Or natty hose for natty gents  
But what upsets my every molar  
Is he who wears the genteel British bowler

The bowler has a lethal shape  
It has a bloom just like a grape  
It should be covered up with crêpe  
For it will always be  
A gloomy headwear to be wearing  
Derided when you are out of hearing  
A hissing and in fact sneering  
A strange monstrosity

It cannot quite be called a hat  
It has not enough brim for that  
Differing opinions might be well met  
In terming it a kind of helmet  
And yet it's not the sort of cattle  
That one would fancy for a battle  
I fear until the Trump of Doom  
I shall not see man add a plume  
A panache crest or white cockade  
Oh what a difference would have made!

I do not mean this ode to be  
Aimed at the Foreign Secretary  
In fact I am very wary  
Of the Foreign Secretary

But bowlers have me on the raw  
I seem to feel it more and more  
I'd like a law from a dictator  
To dump them in a mountain crater  
Arranging an acute eruption  
That one and all might see corruption  
I'd go to almost any length  
Of frantic quite to evil strength  
A happier human race to see  
Freed from this hateful millinery

## **To my mother**

late 1930s

If I should love you, as you  
Have loved me; true  
To your own fair idol of me: false  
Only to any picture of me else,  
Then might my love surpassing be  
Like yours for me.

Your love is like light  
Constant and bright,  
Here is only bliss  
To be loved like this  
He - or she - loves changeover  
Yours never.

I change and grow  
Different and slow  
Time building up a nature  
Draws in each a feature  
To be unchanged and true  
Only belongs to you.

If there is any good  
In me, or if I should  
Nothing achieve.

## **Anthem for the dictators**

late 1930s

German daughters, German sons  
Give up butter for your guns!  
Learn your hunger to forget.  
Have you not the bayonet?  
Does it matter, feeble wit,  
If you break your teeth on it?  
For the truth, as you know well, is  
Steel is good for empty bellies.

Roman sons and Roman daughters  
Leave your wine for cheaper waters!  
Please to know that alcohol  
Is a harmful chemical.  
We can find a better use  
For this gift which you abuse.  
What are trifling prohibitions  
To the making of munitions?

What is freedom of the mind  
But an intellectual blind?  
All the learning of the schools  
So much wrangling of fools!  
What is love and plighted word  
To the glory of the sword?  
Is the blood in human veins  
Of more worth than aeroplanes?

Let your hate be universal  
Finite and uncontroversial.  
Let your propaganda shout it  
Let there be no doubt about it.  
Stamp, and spurn and vilify  
All that others glorify.  
Spurn the persecuted Jew  
[He would do the same to you!]  
Bellow till the heavens fall  
Hitler is the god of all!

## **Presents for my aunt**

late 1930s

I sent my aunt a lizard to be a kind of pet  
She said it had got house-maid's knee and sent it to the vet.  
The vet remarked with feeling that he didn't like the creature,  
"It's just like her to send it, "and "You see if I don't teach her!"  
I sent my aunt a motor-bus, she ran it upon glue;  
I sent my aunt some strychnine, she put it in the stew;  
I thought it best to do her in with very little pain,  
And now I shall not have to send her anything again!

## **Resurgent**

late 1930s

There shall be no more wars  
But the remembrance of wars  
And the memory of those who died  
Shall be hallowed unto all generations,  
Yea, their names shall be hallowed  
And shall remain like precious odours,  
Whose scent lingereth in the air of the temple;  
And men shall remember their examples,  
When the remembrance of their looks  
Shall be as a dream, and theirs shall not be  
Wailing beside their memorials nor tears, nor cries  
But joy, for they are among the Blessed  
And their name liveth for evermore.

There shall be no more grief  
For the remembrance of them  
Shall be as a balm  
To hurt minds and weary, aching hearts  
For time shall soften grief:  
And their sacrifice  
Shall be an everlasting example,  
For they were lovely  
And pleasant in their lives;  
And were faithful  
Even unto death.  
They were not without fear  
For they were but men  
But they slew their fears, even as the sun  
Slays with his rays the shadows of the night.  
They are not dead for they are one with us,  
They do but sleep and when the watch of the night  
Is ended they will arise!

There is no death.

## Untitled song

late 1930s

England, O England pray lend me thy ears  
[All along Deutschland and Admiral Graf Spee]  
And give me a hand with this treaty I've made,"  
Said Hitler, Lord Haw-haw, Josef Goebbels, Von Ribbentrop,  
Herr Himmler, Reich minister Goering and all.

"And what is this use you have made of my word?"

[All along Deutschland and Admiral Graf Spee]  
"Tis a treaty of friendship - the Munich Accord  
Said Hitler, Lord Haw-haw, Josef Goebbels, Von Ribbentrop,  
Herr Himmler, Reich minister Goering and all.

"And when shall I reap the reward that is mine?"

"By March or September nineteen thirty-nine"

In March, England climbed to the top of the Hill  
And saw Czechoslovakia making her Will

Poor Czechoslovakia took sick and died.  
When Germans attacked her on every side

But England had hardly had time to be vexed  
Ere Memel and Poland were swallowed up next  
Said Hitler, Lord Haw-haw, Josef Goebbels, Von Ribbentrop,  
Herr Himmler, Reich minister Goering and all.

But that's not the end of this frightful affair,  
[All along Deutschland and Admiral Graf Spee]  
Nor half of the tale of the hideous war  
Said Hitler, Lord Haw-haw, Josef Goebbels, Von Ribbentrop,  
Herr Himmler, Reich minister Goering and all.

And when the waves roar on the ether at night  
[All along Deutschland and Admiral Graf Spee]

## **Early 1940s**



## **Pan's Song**

1940s

A little piping by a stream  
Tiny, sibilant, unseen  
Lips upon a reed  
Blowing faintly, as the seed  
Ripens slowly in the pod;  
Where the Naiades once trod  
Piping softly, piping near,  
I am coming ... I am here.  
Gods and men were all still young  
When in Arcady we sung;  
When by Tempes streams we played  
In the sunshine - dappled shade.  
Piping shrilly, piping far  
I know where the dead gods are.  
I alone of gods and men  
Change - turn and change again.  
When the leaves are born and die  
In the winter, there am I:  
I, the nimble-footed Pan  
Old as nature old as man.  
Piping softly, singing even  
Making dance the stars in heaven.

## **Pietà**

1940s

Small, golden, a wisp of woman-hood  
In the dark, distant future a woman grown  
Kicking, square-toed at scythed stubble  
By Death mown down

Eyes wonder. I straddle a crater  
Ploughed by a bursting shell  
Grey in my hand and cup-like  
Part of a skull

Laughing I let it fall  
Stabat Mater dolorosa  
Juxta cruces lachrymosa  
Dum pendebat filius

O, but this bone is cheap that grows from a woman  
Blind in the womb to pitiful birth  
Cheaper than bullet or steel for destroying  
Dung and manure to the earth

## 1938 to 1929

### 1940s

Dead years, you were the best of life I had  
Free from all bitterness and frustrate pain  
When I had scarcely leisure to be sad  
I shall not know your liberty again

This may be ruin that I look on now  
Shadowy half-life in a body marred  
Weak, useless, savage with my own despair  
Youth's hopes to ashes mercilessly charred

This was the childish promise of great things  
This was a hope, realised in emptiness  
This was the future, agonising past  
This is, and will be, lasting bitterness

## **Sonnet**

1940s

For you, only for you, I bowed my mind  
From its faint-starred way among my dreams  
To the well-trodden pathways that we find  
Leading to misery among the gleams  
Of unattained ambition (faith unsworn  
With open lips, pledged in a silent will)  
I find a justified intent, a longing born  
Of love and pity - my reminders still -  
But I have failed so ill that would so well  
Have won for you. What have I to show  
Except my selfish weariness of self  
The ache of inefficiency - pain of the Hell  
Wherein I move a twin? Save I might grow  
In loving you more worthy of myself

## Untitled spring poem

1940s

How have I leisure to be sad  
When primroses, spent stars, lie at my feet  
And violets, like maiden eyelids peep  
Forth from the breathing earth  
Fresh warm with life

And daffodils like trumpets speak  
That spring is come into the fields again?

Spring might not come to me in this guise again  
I might not hear the wren  
That from the lime tree sings  
With fluttering, down drooped wings  
And such an angel's tongue

Even the nettles bloom  
As if they promise evil should not sting  
Nor suffering  
Have any room

**Looking forward, Lorna Lloyd, March 1931**

I wonder if, in a hundred years,  
Someone will find my writings dimmed with time  
And know my bitter longings and my fears  
And find a meaning in each uncouth rhyme.  
I wonder if they'll wonder how I looked  
And sigh and laugh quite tenderly, and then  
Set back my books on the forgotten shelf  
Where they have lain, and so forget again.  
I wonder if perhaps some smouldering spark  
Hidden away in an unlettered rhyme  
May help somebody groping in the dark  
As never was I able in my time.

**Looking back, Hazel Hall, 23 November 2019**

Almost a hundred years, but not quite  
We found your writings  
Half-forgotten, embers still smouldering  
  
Many more of us than you could ever have imagined  
Each day explore the traces that you left  
Reaching into the light that you shed on your world  
To illuminate our own

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