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The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney

Michael Hurd

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First published in 1978 The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney is a moving and extraordinary account of a tragic genius penned by the composer Michael Hurd. Born in Gloucester in 1890 Ivor Gurney began writing songs and poems in his teens, taking his inspiration from the Severn Valley countryside where he grew up. Sent to the Western Front during the First World War Gurney experienced desolation and horror that made a profound impression on him. He ended his days in an asylum, but at his death in 1937 he was beginning to be acknowledged as one of England's finest composers. Still, it took several more decades for his work as a war poet to be fully appreciated.
'Hurd compresses into a taut, sympathetic outline the initial optimism and later torment of Gurney's ill-starred life... distinguished by its crisp use of poetic extracts.' *PN Review*

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