

**CATALOGUE OF  
THE IVOR GURNEY ARCHIVE**

Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucester

D10500/1/D

**ORIGINAL WORKS:  
DRAMATIC WORKS (Plays)**

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**National Manuscripts Conservation Trust**

Series Gloucestershire Archives

D10500/1/D

[1926]

**Dramatic Works (Plays)**

Description: In his recollection of Gurney published in 'Music and Letters', January 1938, Herbert Howells recalled that by the time he joined Gurney at the Royal College of Music in 1912, Gurney was planning a cycle of operas based on the short plays of W.B. Yeats. He was thinking of making an opera out of J.M. Synge's play, 'Riders to the Sea'; and by 1913 he was devising a 'Moussorgsky-like music-drama [...] on the subject of Simon de Montfort' (Herbert Howells, 'Music & Letters', January 1938). However, no material for these works is extant, only material for three plays of 1926 surviving, one of which only in the survival of a title page. Of these, only one, 'The Tewkesbury Trial', is complete.

Notes: See also D10500/1/R, which includes a number of 'rewritings' of plays by Shakespeare.

Item D10500/1/D/1

(52.3)

Gloucester Play

undated [1926]

Description: Brown exercise book titled in pencil on the inside front cover 'Gloucester play/unfinished', containing scenes one, two and part of scene three of the first act of a play set in Gloucester, 900AD.

1 exercise book Notes: Manuscript; ink and pencil. 15 folios, many loose, most of which are numbered pp1-20 by Gurney. Folios 12v and 15r/v contain various pencil notes, mainly consisting of a list of body parts.

Subseries D10500/1/D/2

The Tewkesbury Trial

[April 1926]

Description: This play of April 1926 is partly extant in manuscript, and complete in its final typescript version. Consisting of five acts, and set in and around Gloucestershire, the Cotswolds, Warwick and (briefly) Chartres in the 1420s-30s, the work is perhaps dramatically incoherent, but is fascinating for what Gurney voices through his characters, in his thoughts on landscape, music, poetry, and indeed as to what plays should be. Some of it takes place on the periphery of major events, such as a battle and, notably, the death of Henry V [a year early], whose spirit is also present in the celebrations of St. Crispin's Day, 1422, seven years after the battle of Agincourt. With its numerous tavern scenes, set in Dursley, Fairford and Tewkesbury, it answers a criticism made by Gurney in his essay 'On Earth' (D10500/1/E/5), in which he laments the lack of 'good tavern-scenes in our play literature'. Gurney also appears personally in this play, introducing a character by the name of John Daniells: a pseudonym used by Gurney at around this time.

2 documents

Item D10500/1/D/2/1  
(52.4) [The Tewkesbury Trial] [April 1926]  
Description: Notebook containing a draft of the first act and opening of the second act of a play titled, on inside cover, 'Ma{?} of Tewkesbury play.' - what was to become 'The Tewkesbury Trial'.  
1 exercise book (36 pages in wrappers) Notes: Manuscript; ink.

Item D10500/1/D/2/2  
(42.8) The Tewkesbury Trial [April 1926]  
Description: Typescript of the complete play, titled 'The Tewkesbury Trial. / A Pella, / (Trudgi - commodity) / I. B. Gurney.  
87 pages Notes: Typescript. There are a number of differences between the manuscript of the opening of the play and this typescript, suggesting that there was an intermediary stage of development in the work.

Item D10500/1/D/3  
(85.24) Play of Winter [Autumn 1926]  
Description: The title page of 'A Verse Play', none of the substance of which is extant.  
1p. Notes: Manuscript; ink. Addressed to F.W. Harvey. How much, if any of the work was written aside from this title page is unknown.