In Memoriam
Dame Nellie Melba
For Three Female Voices
Melbourne, March 1931

Fritz Hart
Kent, 1874 – Honolulu, 1949

Edited by
Richard Divall

Music Archive Monash University
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Introduction

Fritz Hart was part of the extraordinary diaspora of British composers who, attracted to the various Dominions and colonies of the then British Empire, disseminated the influence of their British musical tradition and the fashionable Celtic revival to many parts of the world. Hart’s contribution to music in Australia, and later Hawaii, is remarkable, and he distinguished himself as a composer, teacher and mentor as well as a conductor and writer. With the exception of Charles Edward Horsley, he was the finest orchestrator to work in Australia before 1930, and his musical influence in this country lasted for a considerable time, especially through his students, including Margaret Sutherland and Peggy Glanville-Hicks. Both as teacher and mentor, he was especially encouraging to female composers.

Born in Brockley, Kent in 1874, Fritz Hart was a chorister at Westminster Abbey and studied at the Royal College of Music, where he formed lifelong friendships with Gustav Holst, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Granville Bantock. He migrated to Australia in 1909 and for many years was Director of the Albert Street Conservatorium of Music in Melbourne, in succession to G.W.L. Marshall-Hall. Renamed the Melba Conservatorium of Music, Dame Nellie Melba became one of his greatest champions. He was also a joint founder, with Alfred Hill, of the Australian Opera League. In 1937 he permanently relocated to Honolulu, where he conducted the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra. After his death in Hawaii in 1949, all of his scores were returned to Melbourne, where they are held in the Latrobe Library of the State Library of Victoria.

Hart’s output included twenty-two operas, two large-scale symphonies, two string quartets, several concertos and a Symphonic Rhapsody for violin and orchestra, three sonatas for violin and piano, and choral, organ, and other keyboard music. He is remarkable for his 500-odd songs, set to diverse texts, including poems of the Celtic revival and those of many Australian poets. These songs have not been forgotten: Stephen Banfield, for example, gives them serious consideration in his 1985 study of twentieth-century British song. Details of Hart’s life and career, and a full catalogue of his works are found in Peter Tregear’s excellent ‘Fritz Bennicke Hart-An Introduction to his Life and Music’, M.Mus. Thesis University of Melbourne 1993. The work is reproduced in facsimile on page seventy-nine of the thesis.

This short and extremely beautiful work for three female voices was written for the memorial service held at the grave of Dame Nellie Melba at Lilydale cemetery in March 1931. The manuscript of the ‘In Memoriam’ is held in the State Library of Victoria, Latrobe Library, LaTL 9528/1. There are no editorial notes.

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Richard Divall
April 2014.
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Melbourne - March 1931

Fritz Hart 1872-1949
Edited by Richard Divall

Poco adagio

[Soprano I] [Soprano II] [Alto]

[1] Lie here at rest.... a-mid these peace-ful hills..... Your task is ov-er, your

[2] path is trod..... Night comes at last..... and peace your spi-rit fills... as you sleep.....

[3] path is trod..... Night comes at last..... and peace your spi-rit fills... as you sleep.....

[4] path is trod..... Night comes at last..... and peace your spi-rit fills... as you sleep.....

[5] as you sleep in God. Re-qui-em ae-

[6] sleep in God. Re-qui-

[7] sleep in God.

[8] Re-qui-

[9] Re-qui-

[10] Re-qui-

[11] Re-qui-

[12] Re-qui-

[13] Re-qui-

[14] Re-qui-

[15] Re-qui-

[16] Re-qui-

[17] Re-qui-

[18] Re-qui-

[19] Re-qui-

[20] Re-qui-

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The whole world heard you, and mourns your passing Royal Queen of Song;....

But we who loved you, lament the woman gone from us among.

Da Capo [al Fine]