

Three Songs on Poems of Housman Program Information

With rue my heart is laden from *A Shropshire Lad* (LIV)

With rue my heart is laden
For golden friends I had,
For many a rose-lipt maiden
And many a lightfoot lad.

By brooks too broad for leaping
The lightfoot boys are laid;
The rose-lipt girls are sleeping
In fields where roses fade.

Oh, when I was in love with you from *A Shropshire Lad* (XVIII)

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was clean and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
How well I did behave.

And now the fancy passes by,
And nothing will remain,
And miles around they'll say that I
Am quite myself again.

Into my heart an air that kills from *A Shropshire Lad* (XL)

Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again.

Program Notes

“Alfred Edward Housman (1859 – 1936) was one of the finest classical scholars of his time, but it is as a poet that he is best known. His verse is noted for its economy of words and directness of statement, pictures of the English countryside, and the fusion of humor and pathos. The passing of youth and the inevitability of death is his most characteristic theme.” (Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition, 2001.)

The three poems selected are among his best known. The settings mirror the poetry of Housman in their simplicity and directness.

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