

Poetry Series

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby
- poems -

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Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby()

Lawrence was born on June 23rd 1918, the son of Lawrence Fearby (b.1888) and Minnie (nee Frankpitt) (b.1888) . When Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby was 1 year, his paternal grandfather, a railway worker became Mayor of Castle Morpeth. Lawrence was a voracious reader and musician. He was especially keen on classical music and had been acquainted with Sir Thomas Beecham. Another major interest was Poetry and he was a great fan of Robert Burns especially. Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby married Ruth Eugenie Dryden (3 years his junior) on 16th August 1941 at St. Peter's Church in Huddersfield. The couple had 5 sons between 1941 and 1954, the first of which became my grandfather. Using photographs in the war scrapbook of Lawrence and the dates given at the foot of his poems, I have been able to construct a timeline of his wartime career:

16-07-1942: Cairo (Signal Corps,8th Army)

7-10-1942: Cairo Hospital

23-10-1942: Mount of Olives

24-10-1942: Old Jerusalem

24-10-1942: Bethlehem

08-12-1942: Alexandria

20-12-1942: Port Said

02-01-1943: Nicosia (Cyprus) (Signals: 8th Hussars)

06-02-1943: Augusta (Cyprus) (Signals: 8th Hussars)

20-02-1943: Larnaca (Cyprus) (8th Hussars)

01-06-1943: Kyrenia (Cyprus)

01-09-1943: Nazareth

27-11-1943: Damascus

14-12-1943: Baalbeck (Lebanon) (Signal Corps,3rd Regt RA)

29-06-1944: Assisi

02-01-1945: Florence / Turin (3rd Medium Regt)

23-05-1945: Weiringen (Netherlands) (RHQ 3rd Medium Regt)

10-06-1945: Den Oever (Netherlands)

07-07-1945: Oldenburg (Germany)

Lawrence survived WWII and thankfully returned home with an amazing photograph album and many new books, the most impressive of which is a dictionary bound in Egyptian camel hair. Lawrence died in 1998 and his widow outlived him, dying in 2010.

Visit

Equality

If everyone could tempted be,

The rich, the poor man equally

The cowlèd nun, a shy recluse.

The city harlot lewdly loose.

The peasant uninitiate

The wise man in this learned state

What little virtue would remain

The devil points a richer gain.

But paint Hell's mystery in gold

With pleasure, wealth and joy untold.

Imagine Paradise in snow

No lasting peace; No sumptuous show.

Would priest still humbly bend the knee

Prepared to practise charity.

To follow unrewarded good.

As by the faith we're told we should.

L.F Fearby

1942

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Fly

THE FLY

Oh! fly thou e'er unwanted creature

Damnably in every feature

Blessings on you, may you choke

And cease to pester peaceful folk

You creepy, crawly useless thing

Why must you tickle as you cling

And wipe your foully filthy feet

On man - God's chosen and elite.

Foul vermin though I swat and kill

And pile crushed corpses higher still

You send your reinforcements in

To join that heap of slaughtered kin

You even share my meagre meal

Will nothing curb each cursed zeal

In scalding tea why seek to swim

When death awaits you on the brim.

You blight the dewy dawn of day
As with its light you rouse your pray
You'll watch him rend his way to bed
Before your blessed belly's fed

Go buzz about you burdened beast
He'll not disturb your glutinous feast
No I - parasite you'd rather die
So here's at you filthy fly.

I'm sure that slimy sweat's enough
without your sticking to the stuff
Oh! Why did God inflict us so?
I'd give a deal of wealth to know.

Could I control your wasted life
I'd save a lot of senseless strife.
And give you powers to perceive
'Tis deadly thus to steal and thieve
Had I but half of Robbie's wit

I'd here expound the best of it
Oh would that Burns could live again
To pen some aptly suited strain

Alas, could even he prevail
On nature with a rusting nail
The fly would still buzz out his glee
And feed on folks like you and me.

LF Fearby

Libya 26/08/1942

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Girl Friend

Girl Friend (Youthful Impressions)

To me she seems a vision fair

With velvet skin and golden hair

Her eyes: They speak of innocence,

Her bearing pride and eminence!

She'll talk of form and nobly made

Nor doth the impression easily fade.

Oh! How may verses illustrate

Where none may hope to emulate?

When virtues urge to Church she goes

And from a prayer book prattles prose

Thus hoping she may make amends

Her knees in penitence she bends

Though wildly jealous; quickly calmed

Forgiving wrong though truly harmed

Whatever ill I do or say

'Tis all forgotten within the day!

Although she'll chatter on to me
Of matters and of things we see
In company it's yes or no
Her eloquence has ceased to flow!

Being apt to change that fickle will
She'll seldom promise and fulfill
There always is that lingering doubt
She'll change her mind and turn about.

When duty calls, I must away
We part with tearful eyed dismay
But when I'm gone as life is brief
She'll means devise to cause me grief.

If she should chance in passing by
To catch a look from someone's eye
She'll prim her pride in foolish glee
That tyrant man has turned to see

In captivating other males
Where flattery but seldom fails
Her heart is won to love until
She finds 'tis I she's wanting still.

With looks she'll seek my scorn to tame
All unimpressed by moral shame
She'll all deny but nothing own
'Til tears in her guilt is shown

In estimable moments she
Bewails her numerous faults to me
But conscience though thy stabs she feel
'Tis vanity that blunts the steel!

Though vain and thoughtless yet she's kind
To me at last her giving's blind
For aught I ask, I shall receive
Nor morn request, or giving grieve.

Her mind on film stars is bent

With empty trivial things it's pent
A gay coquet with foolish dreams
Of powder, rouge and facial creams!

Attempts to move or to effect
Imbibe, transfuse or intersect
That maiden's mind has proved a quest
Of futile patient interest!

Should earthly pleasures be unknown?
Or to the surfeit she be prone?
Then possibly she may be true
And never drawn to pastures new!

In fervent prayer, I humbly kneel
That truth to her God will reveal
She'll learn of virtues, modesty
The folly of inconstancy!

6 Years Later
To noble charming wife I'm wed
Contented, happy, over-fed

Oh time, that ever fleeting time,
Hath passed since first I penned this rhyme!

The self same 'Miss' I did deride
Is seated radiant at my side
Have all these faults, so real before
Departed to be seen no more?

Oh! 'Tisn't that she's truly changed
Or was my judgment all deranged
Or did I dream and waking see
The blinding of this errant me?

Or did Almighty deem its worth?
His while to bless my hours on earth
And sending to my plan his ear
Has chased away all doubt and fear.

Girl Friend (Conclusion)

Can mere man judge womankind
When all depends on what we find
O' still the achings of his heart

When Cupid's cast that deadly dart.

A woman formed to mortal plan

To every wish of foolish man

Would be no thing of perfect bliss

But nature sadly gone amiss!

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Home

Could hope but take me by the hand
And lead me to that dreamt of land
Oh! God in simple faith I cling
Some day you'll grant this wondrous thing.

Away from heat and sand and flies
And burning placid desert skies
Oh! Give me England's cooling rain
Her winds to blow the leaves again

I wish not wealth nor power nor fame
Nor yet a title to my name
I do not seek your marble halls
But just a roof before your walls.

Four walls that stand on English ground
With woods, and fields and hills around
Or be it on your moorland down
Or in that smoky busy town

While winter's snow stands ankle high
And tumbles from a milk-white sky
The evening finds me with a book
Beside that cozy chimney nook.

Glad music too would fill the air.
Around that happy pair,
Quiet themes and mighty chords
To shake the very flooring boards

But pause and let me bring to mind
That greater joys are there to find
It needs no man created art
To satisfy a simple heart

Yea oaks and elms in green array
I'd watch your every bend and sway
'Tis gold that copper beech to me
Much more than just a common tree

When summer lends its gladdening rays

I'd seek the stream and mountain braes.

Thus steeped in nature's joy I'd thrive

And thank The Lord to be alive.

And when at last, I joined the dead,

I would be on neatly pillowed bed.

From thence amid the good brown earth

Beneath the land that gave me birth.

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

30-09-1942

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Libya (On Libya's Sand)

From England to the muddy Nile

Where sunbeams greet the Sphinx's smile

From there to join the rank and file.

On Libya's Sand

By limpid ocean's blue

Where vegetation never grew

On past ruined Mersa-Matruh.

On Libya's Sand

From burning sun no welcome shade

Scorched, unwashed, unkempt, dismayed

Oh! water, where's thy cooling aid.

On Libya's Sand

Biscuits, Bully Beef and tea

A nauseating memory

But quite an appetizing three

On Libya's Sand

Hanging on by hair and teeth

In battered trucks that bounce beneath

Loose your hold and come to grief.

On Libya's Sand

Oh! Watch that deadly scorpion's bite

That joined tail, or quick as light

He'll taint you with his venom'd spit.

On Libya's sand

Bombers swooping on their pray

Hurtle down the power to slay

Shattering bombs and cannon spray

On Libya's Sand

Ever whistling through the air
Shells that end this life's affair
To dig in ditch and shiver there

On Libya's Sand

Nightly as some parted soul
Lying in an oblong hole
Burrowed like the timorous mole.

On Libya's Sand

As the moon begins to wain
By light of plane the weary brain
Waits the dreaded Hooker plane.

On Libya's sand

If blessed sleep shall come at last
'Tis but to wake to crash and blast

A German raider's roaring past

O'er Libya's Sand

Oh! death, destruction, devastation

Endless, empty desolation

Life to me's no jubilation

On Libya's Sand

For wife in England, miles away

Each night on stoney bed I'll pray

God send me back far far away

From Libya's Sand

Oh! you who mourn life's cruel blows.

Yet driving well find sweet repose

But pause a while and think of those.

On Libya's Sand

Lawrence F. Fearby

07/10/1942

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Mother

Would God but guide this wayward pen?

Or lift me above my fellow men?

I'd scribe such wondrous lines to thee

That critics would cross the world to see

You taught me ever to be true

But no-one is always that but you

Of constancy you used to say

In life indeed 'tis the only way

And yet in gazing 'round me now

I fear that most men have taken the vow

The truth shall only serve the hour

Whatever will answer best hath power

So cast like seed on thorny field

Life's sordid side is soon revealed

One light burns brightly ever clear

No misguided doubts can enter here.

No matter what in life's unsure

My faith in this gleaming light's secure

A mother's love must ever be

A firm unshaken reality.

Lawrence Frankpitt FEARBY

23/09/1942

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Music

Immortal music's glorious theme

All other joys how futile seem

Compared to this enraptured balm

It's rampant flare: It's peaceful calm

A subject to its melting sway

The evil world will fade away

To lend the mind inspired bliss

A paradise on earth is this

The listening ear must concentrate

To follow with its changing rate

The harmony of blended chords

The subtlety its depths afford

Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Brahms and Bach

have all achieved a lasting mark

'Tis genius and golden art

The modest works of young Mozart

The luxurious haunting oboes call
Its eastern echo minds enthrall
I see the palms in swaying green
The Sheik, the Mosque, the desert scene

The blatant horn describing man
His fearless, brutal, determined plan
The mighty clap of thunderous drum
Depicting chaos yet to come

The angels and to God akin
The magic of the violin
With warmth to woe the wildest beast
Oh! Fiddler charm my soul to rest.

Combined with others these compound
That galaxy of wondrous sound
Like finely woven tapestry
That fine orchaestral unity.

Involved the depths of symphony

A simple lift in rhapsody

But jazz is obviously insane

Superficial and insane.

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Nurse

How oft I've watched thy measure tread

As silently from bed to bed

You wend your solitary way

Shedding o'er each sombre scene

A soothing ray

Oh! White clad messenger of ease

Sole ray of comfort in disease

May Heaven bless your kindly eyes

Oh! Nurse thrice blessed seraphim

In earthly guise

As tirelessly you end each pain

And cheer the drooping, fevered brain

The torments that the flesh beguile

With softly reassuring word and ready smile.

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Cairo 16-07-1942

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

Prayer

Ye powers attribute to prayer
Rebuke the smiling, doubting stare
That will be cast by smug content
Who'll deem your woman's sentiment.

Despite those hypocrites who go
To Church parading all their show
They mock the Christian faith, I fear.
But all are free to enter here.

In practice must all virtue lie?
Not in a meekness of the eye
Not in displays of worldly wealth
But subjugation of the self?

Can he who lives for self alone
Believe in God the great unknown?
Or that his smallest wish or whim
Could come to pass because of Him?

'Tis said of faith 'twill mountains move

And doubting we can never prove

Yet many men are healed still

By faith alone in physic's skill

Repentance though it cancel naught

Will firmly plant the mortal thought;

Have faith repudiate your sin

Ne'er let corruption rot within.

Thus falling to depths of dull despair

A solace find in patient prayer

And kneeling humbly upon the knee

Pour out your heart felt misery.

Thus God destroy, obliterate.

Persuade the mass that all is fate

That Christian virtue nothing gains

To erring man what hope remains

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

The Great Unknown

Opinions of the ultimate

Of death th'eternal second state

Are varied as the colours fair

In rainbows and just so much air!

Some say of earth's delights drink deep

For death precedes eternal sleep

Will Omar Khayyam hold the view,

'Tis immaterial what we do?

Can man who laid in wooden frame

'Neath stoney slab that bears his name

Reap benefits from worldly gain

Know aught of earthly bliss or pain?

I've heard it said we but adjourn

That deaths prelude a further turn

This finite shell they thus decree

Mere passing residence for me

The Christian says but serve the Lord
And spent in death beneath the sword
The unknown part we call the soul
Will reach at last the promised goal

However, as they don't quite know
As no-one ever shall below
The many think they'll have a care
Perhaps there is a place up there?

Oh! you who would behold the trial
That lies beyond this earthly pale
Let conscience tell you what's fear
'Tis writ' upon it wondrous clear

May those who hold to virtue's path
For fear of hellish aftermath
Or hope of tenfold retribution
Find in death just distribution

Oh! poor mankind your main concern

Is o'er with things you shall not learn
These scholar men of pious thought
Fill hopeful minds with beauteous naught.
The secret seek it where you can
If best you serve your fellow man
You'll find that paradise you chose
On earth beneath your very nose!

LAWRENCE FRANKPITT FEARBY

1942

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby

War

Oh! Could I but the powers that be

Persuade to listen to my plea

Why cannot God all men combine,

In friendship, trust and love divine?

Why must predominance be sought?

Empires won and battles fought?

With half the world in misery

What purpose then such agony?

Why should not men contented be?

To live at peace on land and sea?

And ending racial dominance,

Give blessed life due prominence?

What use to poor working man

A realm however wide the span?

Just leave him there to dwell in peace

With wife and child ambitions cease.

Does national glory aid his need?

His wants supply; his belly feed?

'Neath gilded glitter of a lie

Still many vital truths will die.

There sitting by his fireside

Writes wealthy, selfish hot head pride

My comrades we shall never yield

'Till corpse glut that bloody field.

We'll teach our youth this noble skill

The way to slaughter and to kill

A peace! Ridiculous indeed;

Let's save our self-respect and bleed.

'Tis blessed duty, he'll persuade

Be sure it's but a masquerade!

What cares he for his fellow kind?

He casts no sorry look behind.

Is there a man of intellect,

Who will uphold this murderous sect?

What of the household dead?

Have deeds and memories thus fled?

The armies march with heads held high

But surely ever wondering why

To question is beyond the means,

Of these poor physical machines.

Oh! Hopeless hope end all fray

To prove to man the safer way

Although his sense may show him how

His vanity will ne'er allow.

By riches, spoils and promised might

Persuaded still the peoples fight

If civilized we're said to be

'Tis cloak to hide atrocity.

Lawrence Frankpitt Fearby