

Sonnet to Rupert Brooke

This “a cappella” song describes the burial of the once celebrated and well-loved poet in an olive grove on the island of Skyron in Greece, during the hour before midnight in April 1915. John Magee, author of “High Flight”, wrote this sonnet in 1938 to win the Rugby School Poetry Prize, and in so doing he paid tribute to a former pupil of the school. The ceremony described is given extra poignance and significance in relation to Brooke’s famous lines:

“If I should die, think only this of me:
That there be some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England.” (from “The Soldier”)

*Choirs are hereby granted permission to print the accompanying score of “Sonnet to Rupert Brooke” and to duplicate as many copies as they require for their own performances. Permission is also given them to perform it, and those who choose to do so are asked to inform John Laing ahead of time, using my **contact page**.*