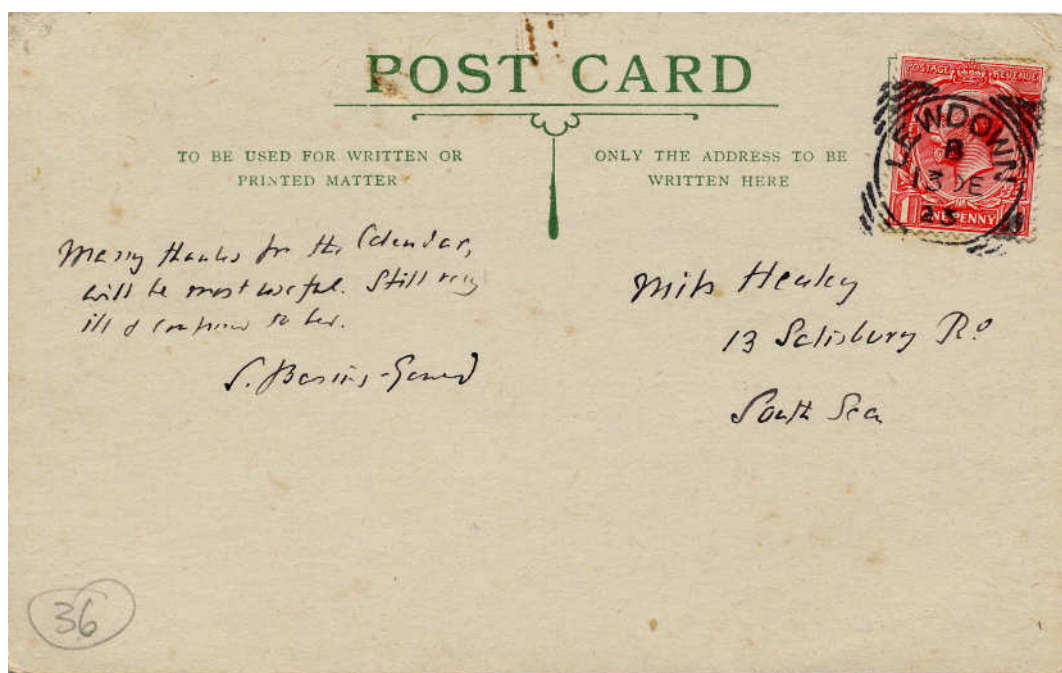


**The Last Thirty Years  
of  
The Life of Sabine Baring-Gould  
as revealed by  
Correspondence with Others**

**By  
Ron Wawman**

**Part II  
Sabine Baring-Gould's  
Correspondence with Evelyn Healey  
1 October 1917 to 13 December 1923**

# Sabine Baring-Gould's Correspondence with Evelyn Healey 1 October 1917 to 13 December 1923



**Fig. 1: A Postcard sent by Sabine to Evelyn Healey 20 days before his death on 2 Jan 1924.**

**The address on the postcard is 13, Salisbury Road, Southsea. This has been verified as that of her father, William Lloyd Healey, when he died on 4 November 1925.**

**Transcribed, researched and annotated  
by  
Ronald Wawman © February 2011**

## **Preface**

In 2005 a collection of letters written by Sabine Baring-Gould to a Miss Evelyn Healey over the years 1917 to 1923 were offered for sale to the Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society. When the society was unable to raise the necessary funds the letters were, instead, purchased by Dr Merriol Almond, a direct descendant of Sabine Baring-Gould and holder of the copyright of unpublished work by him.

Having by then already transcribed and commenced researching a 20 year dairy kept by Sabine, I had become very conscious of the limited amount of primary source material relating to Sabine's last years that was readily available for research. I was therefore delighted when Merriol asked me to transcribe and research these letters. As I read them I quickly realised that this was an important correspondence and likely to significantly influence our perceptions of Sabine's last years. And so it has proved.

## **Acknowledgements**

In addition to being grateful to Dr Merriol Almond for giving me the task of transcribing and researching these letters, I am particularly appreciative of her willingness to permit their publication despite her realisation that my interpretation of the contents, alongside other primary source material from this period, draws attention to an uncomfortable relationship between Sabine and her own grandparents, Edward and Marian Baring-Gould.

Thanks are due to Albert Spry for his help in identifying some of the local personalities referred to in the correspondence and to Martin Graebe not only for identifying Lucky Fewins but also for tracing Evelyn Healey's origins. As always Roger Bristow's bibliography was an invaluable source of information when verifying publications by Sabine that were referred to by him in this correspondence. Finally my thanks to Penny Yeo for her painstaking editing and correcting

Ron Wawman February 2011

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## Introduction

On a summer Sunday in 1917, probably towards the end of September, a young lady introduced herself to Sabine Baring-Gould after he had taken the morning service at St. Peter's Church, Lew Trenchard. She told him that she was on holiday with her mother and staying in Lydford, some four miles from Lew Trenchard. What they talked about is not known but it is possible that the young woman drew attention to mutual acquaintances, spoke of her liking for Sabine's novels and also mentioned her own poetic efforts and literary interests. When they parted company Sabine assumed that the young woman was then returning to Lydford to lunch with her mother. On his return to the church after lunch Sabine was troubled to find that the young woman was still in the church and, in subsequent correspondence with her, he emphasised that, had he known she was not intending to return immediately to Lydford, he would have invited her back to Lew House for lunch.

Following that September meeting the young woman proceeded to purposefully strike up a correspondence with Sabine. This began with her sending him copies of some of her verses for his comment, followed by a letter asking him for a photograph, then further letters enclosing various literary articles. Sabine politely responded to all her letters and thus began a friendship of increasing warmth that continued for the next six years. The correspondence ended on 13 December 1923 with a final letter written by Sabine just 20 days before his death on 2 January 1924. The young woman also made several brief visits to Lew Trenchard at Sabine's invitation.

The young woman was Evelyn Hulme Healey. At present little is known about her background, although her parents have been identified. Her mother was Ada Hume Healey and her father was an RN Instructor who had served in both the Portsmouth and Plymouth areas. It was possible to deduce from Sabine's letters to her that her birthday was probably 12 February. It has since been confirmed that she was indeed born on 12 February 1883. Should therefore would have been 34 years of age when she introduced herself to Sabine. It is also known from the small numbers of postcards in their correspondence, that in August 1918 she was probably living with her parents at Gloucester Place, Greenwich,<sup>1</sup> but that by May 1923 they had moved to Elm Grove, Southsea.<sup>2</sup> Another Southsea address, 13, Salisbury Road, where her father is known to have died in 1925 appears in Sabine's final communication with her.<sup>3</sup>

It is not possible to be certain but Evelyn Healey may well have kept all of the letters that Sabine wrote to her. What is certain is that at an unknown date after his death, she made a typewritten transcription of seventy six letters. It is possible that Sabine also retained Evelyn's letters to him, but, if so, they have not survived. As a result the content of Evelyn's letters can only be inferred from Sabine's response to them. In one letter Sabine described her as *a most practical personage*.<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere he wrote *I am glad you are getting on with Organ playing and are making yourself useful as well as ornamental*.<sup>5</sup> She otherwise remains a tantalisingly shadowy figure and it is not possible to deduce with any degree of certainty what the correspondence meant to her.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter X, 27 August 1918.

<sup>2</sup> Letter LV, 4 May 1923.

<sup>3</sup> Letter LXV, 13 December 1923. See page 2.

<sup>4</sup> Letter XIII, 28 August 1919.

<sup>5</sup> Letter XXI, 28 January 1919.

It is however evident that on one occasion she did attempted to reduce the frequency with which she wrote only to give way to Sabine's entreaties for her to continue as before.

It is known that in 1934, which was the centenary of Sabine's birth, she sold four manuscript copies of his hymns at Sotheby's. It is also known from letters to her from other correspondents that she was still alive in 1954. It has now been established that she died at Exminster Psychiatric Hospital, Exeter. Her address at that time was 'Jasmine,' Stoke Gabriel, Devon.

What happened to the letters when Evelyn Healey died is also not known, but at some point her own typed transcription of the letters, together with 36 of the original manuscript letters, came into the possession of a Mrs Olwen Peck. The location of the other 40 letters, if they survive, is not known.

In 1981 Mrs. Peck wrote to the Manager of Lew House Hotel with a view to disposing of the letters, possibly for display there. The manager declined, telling her that the hotel already *had more of Sabine's letters and writing than it could cope with*. In 1979 and again in 1986 Mrs Peck made similar approaches to Lady Sylvia Sayer, with a view to disposing the letters, through her, to the Dartmoor Preservation Society. Lady Sayer's response to the first letter was lukewarm. Her response to the second approach was enthusiastic but nothing came of it, because of Mrs Peck's deteriorating health. On Mrs Peck's death in 1988 the letters passed to her cousin, who is the wife of Professor Peter Dickinson, through whom the letters were finally and appropriately disposed of to Dr Merriol Almond in 2005. Sadly Professor Dickinson and his wife have no knowledge of Mrs Peck's relationship with Evelyn Healey. Nor do they know how the letters came to be in Mrs Peck's possession. The collection now in the possession of Dr Merriol Almond contains a small number of other documents, including letters to Evelyn Healey from other correspondents and a few letters written to Olwen Peck concerning her efforts to dispose of the collection.

Sabine's correspondence with Evelyn Healey is of significance at different levels. It is evident from the content of his letters that this was a friendship that Sabine valued greatly. He enjoyed the intellectual interests which they shared but it is also evident that a strong emotional bond had grown between them over the years. Evelyn seemed to fill a need in Sabine's life for intellectual and emotional stimulation that his family could not. Also in this correspondence difficulties become apparent in Sabine's relationship with his eldest son, Edward, and Edward's wife, Marian, after they took over management of Lew House following Edward's return home from the Great War in 1919.

However the full significance of the contents of these letters only becomes apparent when they are considered alongside other primary source material, in particular Sabine's correspondence with others at this time. The reader is therefore referred to Part III of this series of papers, *Sabine's Last Thirty Years*, for a detailed analysis and discussion.

## **A Description of Evelyn Healey's Transcription and Surviving Manuscript letters.**

Evelyn Healey's Transcription of 76 letters was typed onto 49 sheets of paper. On the whole her transcription is in reasonably good condition although sheet 48 is tattered and torn to the extent that a part of letter 73 is missing. Sheet 49 on which letter 76 was presumably typed is completely missing, although at some point an unknown hand has added, in pencil, the contents of this letter at the bottom of sheet 48. Fortunately the original manuscript letters that are transcribed as numbers 73 and 76 are included in the collection so that the present transcriber has had no difficulty in dealing with them.

The present transcriber deemed it prudent to make his own transcription of the surviving letters rather than rely wholly on Evelyn Healey's work despite being satisfied that Evelyn's transcription was very reliable. Evelyn did have difficulty with a small number of Sabine's words, as do others who wrestle with his writing. The present transcriber includes himself in that number, but he has had the advantage of recourse to Evelyn's parallel transcription for comparison. He has also been able to view enlarged images of the manuscripts on a computer monitor. The present transcription is therefore probably the more accurate.

One significant by-product of being in a position to compare the contents of the present transcription with that made by Evelyn was the discovery that in her transcription she had deliberately censored out passages from three of the surviving manuscript letters.<sup>6</sup> The contents of these missing passages are of such a nature that they could have caused offence to some members of the Baring-Gould family had they been published. It is therefore possible that Evelyn had thoughts of publishing the letters, but for unknown reasons did not proceed any further.

Evelyn Healey made several manuscript annotations on her typed transcription. The contents of some of these annotations, together with the presence of the initials E.H. alongside some of them, establishes beyond any shadow of doubt that this transcription could only have been made by her.

Evelyn's transcription flows continuously from page to page without a break between letters and without change in the paper used or quality of printing. (See figures 4 and 5.) This suggests that all the letters were transcribed at the same time. The transcription could have been made at any time between Sabine's death and Evelyn's own demise which was at some time after 1954.

Evelyn Healey numbered her transcription of the letters chronologically using Arabic numerals from 1 to 76. To distinguish these from his own transcriptions the present transcriber has used Roman numerals I to LXXVI when numbering the same letters.

At some time in the past the existence of a surviving manuscript letter has been indicated on Evelyn Healey's transcription by the pencilled insertion in an unknown hand of an Arabic number next to the appropriate letter. The present transcriber has

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<sup>6</sup> Letters XVI, 1 January 1920, LVII, 31 May 1923 and LXXIII, 14 November 1923.

deemed it appropriate to use the same notation to number the original letters from 1 to 36 and, where appropriate, these numbers are also entered in his transcription.

## **A Description of the Present Transcription.**

The present transcription is presented here unabridged and extensively annotated. Each letter is headed by a number and the date either on which it was written or, if the communication was in the form of a postcard, the date of the postmark. Where a manuscript letter is held in the collection this is also indicated at the head of the letter.

Sabine frequently resorted to the use of an ampersand. In both the present and Evelyn's transcription these are invariably interpreted as 'and.'

Each letter begins on a fresh page and the footnotes on that page although referring to that letter alone, also include cross references to other letters in the collection as well as to other relevant primary source material.

The index will, among other things, point the reader in the direction of censored passages in Evelyn Healey's transcription, references to her visits to Lew and requests by her for manuscript copies of Sabine's hymns; also the letter in which Sabine, two years into the correspondence, was emboldened to address Evelyn as *My dear Evelyn* instead of *My dear Miss Healey*.



## Examples of the Original letters together with Evelyn Healey's Transcription of them.

The next four pages present images of two particularly significant letters followed by Evelyn Healey's transcription of them

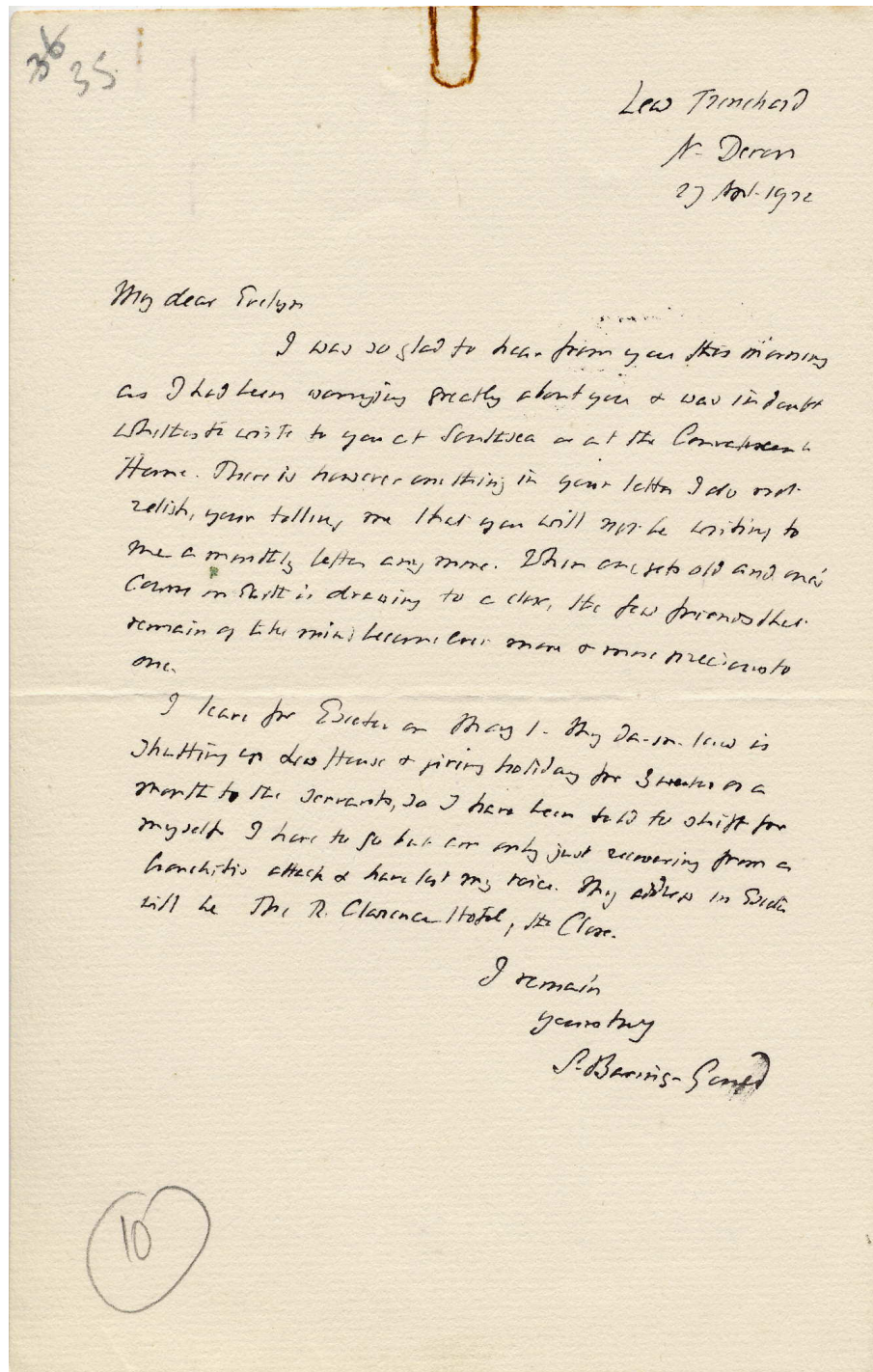


Figure 2: Manuscript Letter 10, Transcription 35.

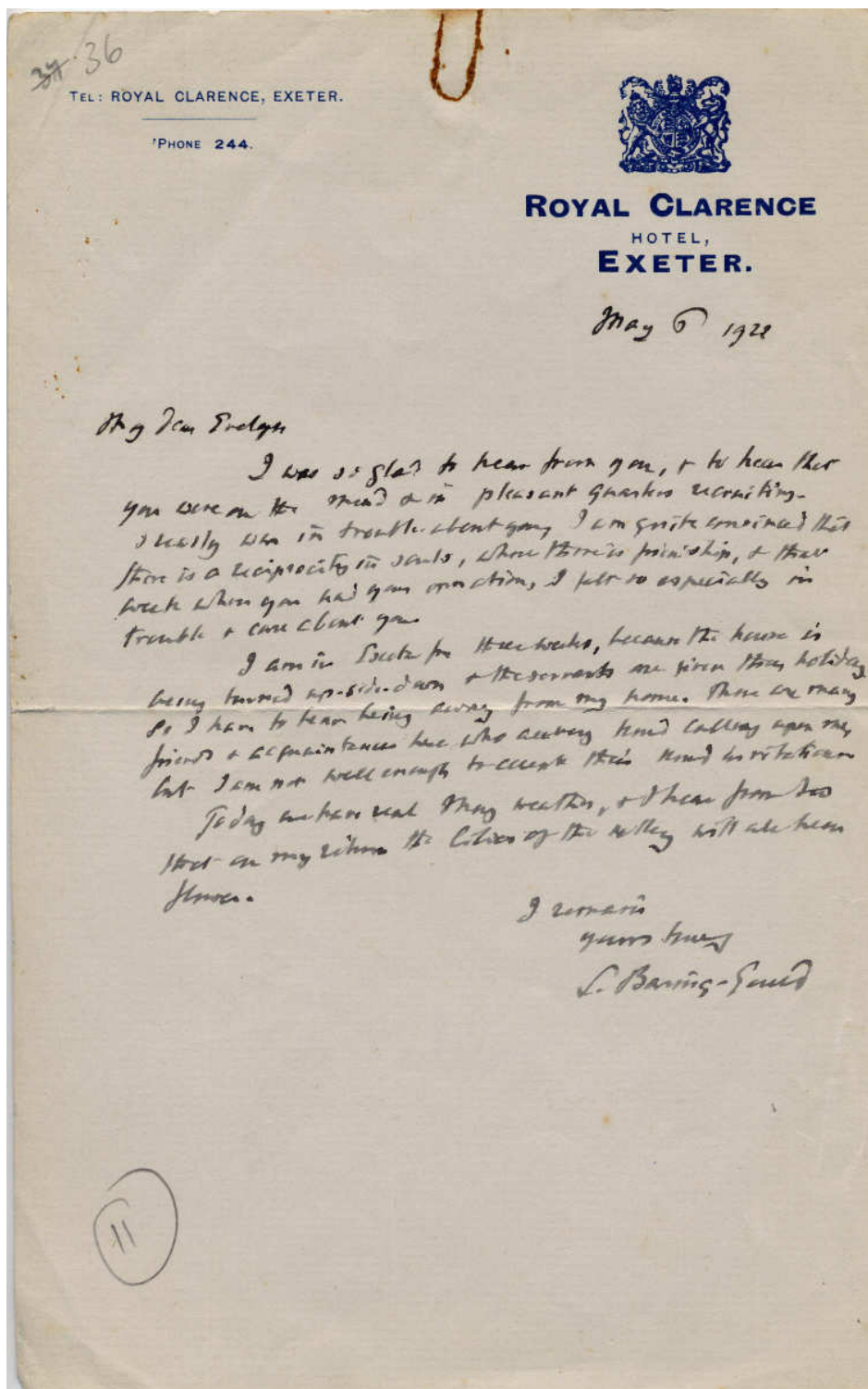


Figure 3: Manuscript Letter 11, Transcription 36.



21.

my mind about the time when you fell ill, and I prayed for you. There is such a thing as reciprocation in minds and among those who are friends.

We have had much sickness in the house and in the parish, but I have kept wonderfully well, and have knocked about a good deal on foot, as my groom ~~was~~ down with influenza and so I could not use the dogcart. The consequence was that I got rather crippled in my feet and had to go into Plymouth last week to have them put to rights.

I remain

Yours truly

S. BARING-GOULD.

35.

Lew Trenchard

N. Devon

27 Apl. 1922

My dear Evelyn

I was so glad to hear from you this morning as I had been worrying greatly about you and was in doubt whether to write to you at Southsea or at the Convalescent Home. ~~There~~ There is however one thing in your letter I do not relish, your telling me that you will not be writing to me a monthly letter any more. When one gets old and one's course on earth is drawing to a close, the few friends that remain of like mind become more and more precious to one.

I leave for Exeter on May 1. My da-in-law is shutting up Lew House and giving holiday for 3 weeks or a month to the servants,

\* It was a nursing home really, not a convalescent one. E.H.

Figure 4: Page 21 of Evelyn Healey's Transcription showing the last part of letter 34 and the first part of letter 35. (Manuscript letter 10) The attention of the reader is drawn to the manuscript annotation by Evelyn: *It was a nursing home really, not a convalescent one. E.H.*

22.

So I have been told to shift for myself. I have to go but am only just recovering from a bronchitic attack and have lost my voice. My address in Exeter will be The R. Clarence Hotel, the Close.

I remain

Yours truly

S. BARING-GOULD.

36.

Royal Clarence Hotel,  
EXETER.

May 6 1922.

My dear Evelyn

I was so glad to hear from you, and to hear that you were on the mend and in pleasant quarters recruiting. I really was in trouble about you. I am quite convinced that there is a reciprocity in souls, where there is friendship, and that week when you had your operation, I felt so especially in trouble and care about you.

I am in Exeter for three weeks, because the house is being turned up-side down and the servants are given their holiday. So I have to bear being away from my home. There are many friends and acquaintances here who are very kind calling upon me, but I am not well enough to accept their kind invitations.

To-day we have real May weather, and I hear from Lew that on my return the lilies of the valley will all be in flower.

I remain

Yours truly

S. BARING-GOULD.

Figure 5: Page 22 of Evelyn's transcription showing the final part of letter 35 (Manuscript letter 10) and the whole of letter 36. (Manuscript letter 11)

## **The Letters**

**Letter I:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
Oct. 1, 1917

Dear Miss Healey,

Thank you for your charming verses. I was so sorry when I found after we had done our lunch that you were still in the Church. I supposed that you were returning at once to Lydford as you had already been in the Church, or I would have offered you lunch.<sup>7</sup>

Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>7</sup> Sabine's concern over not inviting Evelyn Healey to lunch is repeated in letter VI. However it is likely the meeting was contrived by Miss Healey who wanted to form a relationship with Sabine as an author. From later correspondence it can be deduced that she was on holiday at Lydford with her mother.

**Letter II:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
9, Oct 1917

Dear Miss Healey

I return the enclosures. I have really no favourite photo of self and have not been taken for a good many years. I enclose one for you, but I am much older than when I sat for that.<sup>8</sup> I enclose my sketch of the old house at S. Zeal now alas! no more.<sup>9</sup> Please to return it to me. I never heard John Curson sing. "Lucky" Fewens [*sic*] was one of the singers I heard and there were several others.<sup>10</sup>

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>8</sup> It can be assumed from this letter that Evelyn had asked Sabine for a photograph of himself. The nature of her enclosures to Sabine are not known but may have included a photograph of herself.

<sup>9</sup> The identity of the house in South Zeal sketched by Sabine is not known.

<sup>10</sup> In *Further Reminiscences*, p 203. Sabine described a visit to the Oxenham Arms at South Zeal with Mr Bussell. He commented *One of the best singers went by the name of "Lucky Fewins."* The identity of John Curson is not known.

**Letter III:**<sup>11</sup>

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
14 Oct, 1917

I have lost your home address, as I have been laid up and my letters have been dispersed. Thanks greatly for the picture. Excuse more – confined to my bed.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> This letter appears to have been more in the nature of a note to thank Evelyn for the picture. Presumably Evelyn's letter accompanying the picture provided the missing address.

<sup>12</sup> Sabine was frequently 'laid up' with bronchitis in his last years.



**Letter IV:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
Oct 21, 1917

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you very much for the typed transcript from the Swedish book. I shall not have leisure to read the book you so kindly offer me, as I am hard at work upon my History of Religion from the Reformation to the Oxford Movement;<sup>13</sup> and my days for novel reading are over, I never now look at fiction. There is so much of reality in real? \*<sup>14</sup> history that is of greater interest.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

*Manuscript annotation by Evelyn Healey:*

**\*I couldn't make out the word so put query mark<sup>15</sup>.**

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<sup>13</sup> This book was probably *The Evangelical Revival*, published in 1920 by Methuen.

<sup>14</sup> Evelyn Healey's manuscript asterisk.

<sup>15</sup> Comment by the present transcriber. The word 'real' makes sense in this context. Without the original letter no more can be said.

**Letter V:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
6 Dec. 1917

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you for sending me the paper with the republication of your sympathetic verses.<sup>16</sup> I do not know where to advise for its re-issue unless The Treasury  
Messrs Palmer & Son  
Portugal St.  
Lincoln's Inn

What trying weather we are having? I have been laid up for 8 weeks and more with bronchitis and loss of voice.<sup>17</sup> My youngest son<sup>18</sup> who was severely wounded in France has returned to us after 5 months in hospital.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>16</sup> It is likely that these were the verses that Sabine warmly commented on in letter I. There is no trace of these verses in the Baring-Gould Archive at the Devon Record Office.

<sup>17</sup> Sabine was once more laid up with bronchitis.

<sup>18</sup> John then aged 27. See letter VII for a graphic description of John's injuries. In World War I, John was serving with the Royal North Devon Hussars, but in January 1917 had been attached to the Royal Flying Corps and was injured flying over France.

**Letter VI:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
26 December 1917

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you for your kind wishes for a happy New Year; which I reciprocate with all my heart.

I have my youngest daughter, Mrs Calmady Hamlyn<sup>19</sup> here for the winter, with her two children<sup>20</sup> and nurses. They have rigged up the window in the nursery as a crèche, and wreathed the room with holly, but really we have no holly sprigged about elsewhere, not even on the make-believe plum-pudding yesterday.

If you ever come this way again you must come and have lunch with us. I can not get over the vexation of not having asked you when you were here, but really I supposed you were at once returning to Lydford. It was a shock when after lunch I went to the church and found you still there.<sup>21</sup>

I remain  
Yours truly  
S Baring-Gould

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<sup>19</sup> Grace, then aged 26. Her husband, Col. Charles Calmady Hamlyn was serving in the Middle East with the Royal North Devon Hussars.

<sup>20</sup> Grace's two children were Warwick and Cicely.

<sup>21</sup> See letter I.

**Letter VII:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
1 Jan. 1918.

Dear Miss Healey

There - my first letter on New Years Day is to answer yours. 1 Jan 1918. I send you what you ask\*<sup>22</sup> My youngest son<sup>23</sup> who was wounded in the Flying Corps bullets passing thro the stomach tearing thro' the bowels and thro' the stomach as well and injuring the liver, after five months in hospital came to us for Xmas. He has just gone up to the medical exam and I am thankful to say is not to be sent abroad again but given a home job, and not for some time to do any more flying. I am glad of that, as his nerve has been much shaken.

I wish you a very happy New Year

Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

*Manuscript annotation by Evelyn Healey:*

**\*A copy of one of his hymns**

---

<sup>22</sup> Manuscript asterisk inserted by Evelyn.

<sup>23</sup> John, see letter V.

**Letter VIII:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
28<sup>th</sup> Jan 1918

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you so much for your kind congratulations<sup>24</sup> and for the two picture cards. That of the carol singers is distinctly representative of English children though drawn by a Frenchman.<sup>25</sup>

I am sorry you are pinched for food. You will be reduced to a shred. We are not quite so bad in the country, but have to put up with hardships. One thing we have in abundance, wood for fuel.<sup>26</sup>

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>24</sup> Congratulations on Sabine's 84<sup>th</sup> birthday on 28 January.

<sup>25</sup> The whereabouts of the postcards, if they still exist, is not known.

<sup>26</sup> Evidence of wartime shortages, particularly in towns.

**Letter IX:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
2 July 1918

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you for another copy of your charming verses. I am afraid I have no means of disposing of copies\*<sup>27</sup> I wish I had: but now I am so crippled with rheumatism, superadded to old age, that I cannot get about and my chances of pushing the verses are gone. I look to the approach of winter with dread; as I know it will be complete imprisonment in my room if not confinement to my bed.<sup>28</sup>

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

*Manuscript annotation by Evelyn Healey:*

**\*sold in aid of Pats [?]<sup>29</sup>: prisoners of war – not myself!**

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<sup>27</sup> Evelyn Healey's manuscript asterisk.

<sup>28</sup> An indication of how much Sabine's ability to get out and about was limited in his great old age.

<sup>29</sup> This word looks like 'Pats' but, if so, the meaning is not clear. Possibly short for 'patriots.'

**Letter X:****Original manuscript letter no. 1<sup>30</sup>***Postcard addressed to:* Miss E. Healey 18 Gloucester Place, Greenwich SE

Lew Trenchard

N. Devon

27 Aug, 1918

Dear Miss Healey

I am very glad of the success of your verses and that they are to be set to music by a good composer\*<sup>31</sup> Really good composers are singularly rare – they compose out of scraps of melody picked up here and there and dovetailed together more or less successfully, but a really genuine fresh melody - ! Where is one to be found among all these “Compositions?”

Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

*Manuscript annotation by Evelyn Healey:*

**\*Copyright of verses was bought by Boosey and Co<sup>32</sup> as Wilfred Sanderson<sup>33</sup> liked the verses, but in the end nothing came of it.**

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<sup>30</sup> The original postcard is available in addition to Miss Healey’s transcription.

<sup>31</sup> Manuscript asterisk by Evelyn Healey.

<sup>32</sup> Boosey and Co, a music company that merged with Hawkes and Son in 1930 to form Boosey and Hawkes.

<sup>33</sup> Wilfred Sanderson (1878-1935) was a composer of popular songs, such as *Up from Somerset* and also patriotic songs such as *The Trumpet call* and *God be with our boys tonight*. Miss Healey’s verses could well have been of the patriotic kind.

**Letter XI:**  
**Original letter No.2<sup>34</sup>**

Lew Trenchard  
 N. Devon  
 28<sup>th</sup> Jan 1919

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you so much for your kind wishes for my birthday.<sup>35</sup> I am not surprised at your love of Dartmoor. I have loved it ever since I was a boy; but alas! I see very little of it now. Last year I did not set my foot upon it. However I trust this year I may get on it and smell the fragrance of the gorse, once more, as I expect my eldest son<sup>36</sup> back from Palestine and Syria, and then he will have his motor car running.

My step mother<sup>37</sup> living here is over 90 and gets to church twice every Sunday: but I do not want to live on and be a nuisance to my children and servants, at present I am all right, but have to keep indoors nearly all the winter.<sup>38</sup> Oh! I do long for the daffodils and the spring flowers.

I remain  
 Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>34</sup> The original letter is available in addition to Miss Healey's transcription.

<sup>35</sup> Sabine was 85 on 28 January.

<sup>36</sup> Edward, aged 47.

<sup>37</sup> Lavinia, who lived at Ardoch Lodge, Lew Trenchard.

<sup>38</sup> Yet another indication of the extent to which Sabine's mobility was reduced by old age.



**Letter XII:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
Aug 26, 1919.

Come over any day to lunch or tea and I will show you over the house.<sup>39</sup>

S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>39</sup> It must be assumed that Miss Healey visited Devon again in the summer of 1919. Letters XIII and XVI confirm that she visited Lew House, probably for lunch (See letter XVIII,) but nothing more can be deduced about this visit and it is not known where she stayed. The transcription of letters XII and XIII both have the same date. The contents indicate that there must have been a gap of at least a few days between them and that, therefore, at least one date is incorrect.

**Letter XIII:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
Aug 26, 1919

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you so much for the photos, especially that of yourself, but really it makes you much too sentimental, and actually you are a most practical personage.

I was sorry that I was so unwell when you were here and that my voice was so gone that I could not do much in the way of talking. I am better, but my voice is not yet returned.<sup>40</sup>

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>40</sup> Another example of Sabine's repeated bouts of illness in old age.

**Letter XIV<sup>41</sup>:***Must have been written between Aug 27 and 17 September 1919*

Dear Miss Healey

Here you have what you asked for\*<sup>42</sup> Alas! My voice has not returned. When I have these attacks they do not quit me under six weeks

How sad – rain again – and oh, it is wet today.

Yours truly  
S. B-G

*Manuscript annotation by Evelyn Healey:***\*Probably refers to a copy of one of his hymns**


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<sup>41</sup> The transcription has no address or date but Evelyn Healey has presumably transcribed it as belonging at this point in the correspondence.

<sup>42</sup> Manuscript asterisk by Evelyn Healey.

**Letter XV<sup>43</sup>:**

18 Sep.19.

Many thanks for the very pretty lines on a child in a train.  
I am still voiceless this is the 6<sup>th</sup> week of it.<sup>44</sup>

S. B-G<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> No address given in the transcription.

<sup>44</sup> The first of many examples of persistent upper respiratory infection described by Sabine in this correspondence.

<sup>45</sup> It is very unlikely that Sabine signed a letter S.B-G. This is most likely Evelyn's abbreviation.

**Letter XVI:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 3<sup>46</sup>**

Lew Trenchard  
 N. Devon  
 1 Jan 1920

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you so much for kindly thinking of me and sending me your best wishes for a happy New Year.

I am growing so old and infirm that I cannot expect to be long here, and during the winter I am almost wholly a prisoner to my room and house.<sup>47</sup>

I suppose you saw when you last came here,<sup>48</sup> that I am passing over the care of the house and house-hold to my eldest son and daughter-in-law.<sup>49</sup> I was no longer able to manage affairs; **and was being robbed by my servants**<sup>50</sup>

What a dreary winter it is! To-day we have had a little snow, but it did not lie.  
 I return you my best wishes, you have many years before you.

I remain  
 Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>46</sup> Original letter available together with the transcription.

<sup>47</sup> More evidence of the severity of Sabine's incapacity in old age.

<sup>48</sup> Evelyn visited in August 1919. This passage suggests that Edward and Marian moved in and took over the management of the house in the summer of 1919.

<sup>49</sup> Edward and Marian.

<sup>50</sup> The bold type belongs to the transcriber and is used, as elsewhere in the correspondence, to indicate one of three significant phrases prudently omitted from Evelyn Healey's transcription. See letters LVII and LXXIII. It is suggested by Dr Merriol Almond that one of the concerns of Edward and Marian was that, following the death of Grace, Sabine had been drinking unwisely. The implication is that Sabine may have suspected that his servants were drinking his spirits but that in reality the level of alcohol consumption in the house probably reflected Sabine's usage and had nothing to do with the servants.

**Letter XVII:**

Lew Trenchard  
N Devon  
28 Jan, 1920

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you so much for your kind good wishes.<sup>51</sup> We have had frightful storms the last two days and I am in fear of hearing cries of dismay from the farmers and cottagers of roofs ripped, and slates blown off.

We have a plague of measles in the parish so the schools are closed.<sup>52</sup>

Spring is crawling on – no daffodils yet, but snowdrops and in the hedges the pennywort.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>51</sup> Sabine was 86 on 28 January.

<sup>52</sup> On the same date Sabine also wrote to his daughter Mary about the outbreak of measles .

**Letter XVIII:**

2 June '20

I shall be very pleased to see you again. Come over to lunch as you did once before.<sup>53</sup> I will ask my daughter Mrs Calmady Hamlyn,<sup>54</sup> the squiress of Bridestowe, and owner of The Fox and Hounds, to call on your mother. I hope it is the F & H which is quite comfortable. I do not know the other one.

S. B-G.

I have just been over to Bridestowe. The inn you refer to is not the Fox and Hounds, and I fear will prove rather rough and ready, but perhaps your mother will not mind that. It is close on the moor.

Whilst there mind and cross over Sourton Tor, leaving the rocks on the right and descent into the valley of the W. Ockment. It is very beautiful. We were wont often to picnic there.

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<sup>53</sup> Evelyn's previous visit was in August 1919. See letters XII and XIII.

<sup>54</sup> Grace, Sabine's youngest daughter, then aged 28, who lived at Leawood House, Bridestowe.

**Letter XIX:**

8 June, '20

Come over any day that suits you: am always at home.<sup>55</sup>

S. B-G.

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<sup>55</sup> The letters do not say whether or not Miss Healey did visit in the summer of 1920 but it is reasonable to presume she did. It is quite possible that this note was sent in response to news from Bridestowe that Evelyn had arrived there.



**Letter XX:**

Lew Trenchard  
N Devon  
1 Jan 1921

Dear Miss Healey

How kind of you to send me that calendar. I shall have it before me all the year if I live through it, to remind me of your kindness.

In return I send you a photo of myself from a painting by Mr. M. Fisher R.A. which he is going to exhibit next May in the Royal Academy; so we shall not have the original until early in August.<sup>56</sup>

I am very much better. I had an attack of Septic Influenza that laid me up for 3 weeks and I have not got over it yet to be able to feed on solid food, so I live on, very contentedly on slops and bread and milk.<sup>57</sup>

It is such a joy to think the shortest day is over and that now we can look out for the flowers. As I can do little else now, I shall devote the Spring and summer to them. I wish you a very happy New Year

And remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould.

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<sup>56</sup> Portrait by Melton Fisher: Now in the keeping of Dr. Merriol Almond.

<sup>57</sup> Sabine was unwell yet again. Septic influenza is a puzzling diagnosis.

**Letter XXI:**

Lew Trenchard  
N Devon  
28 Jan. 1921

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you so much for your kind letter and good wishes.<sup>58</sup>  
I cannot get out much as the weather here has been so wet and foggy.

Did I send you a photo of my portrait painted by Mr. Fisher R.A. that will be exhibited at the Royal Academy in May? If not I will send you one.<sup>59</sup>

The ground is so sodden that I can not sow the flower seeds. They have to be held back for dryer weather. If sown now they would rot in the ground.

I am glad you are getting on with Organ playing and are making yourself useful as well as ornamental.<sup>60</sup>

Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>58</sup> Good wishes on Sabine's 87th birthday, 28 January.

<sup>59</sup> It is very likely that Sabine sent copies of this photograph to many people including all his children. It is hardly surprising he could not recall if he sent it on to Evelyn.

<sup>60</sup> This comment was intended as a compliment. It is evident from other letters that Sabine thought Evelyn *a practical personage*. It is known from correspondence with his daughter Mary that he approved of women being industrious.

**Letter XXII:**

Lew Trenchard  
N Devon  
Feb 3, 1921

My dear Miss Healey

I have put what you want on the back of the photo.<sup>61</sup> The hood is my M.A. hood (Cambridge).<sup>62</sup> This is the type of what the hood was as one can see from the brasses &c in the College chapels, but it degenerated in time to be a sort of apron at the back. It had its meaning, a covering to the shoulders, and when I was in that aguish and rheumatical island of Mersea in Essex<sup>63</sup> I really needed warmth over the shoulders in a church that was not heated and was surrounded by water. So I had my B.A. and later M.A. hoods cut after the old fashion.

Thank you much for the quotation relative to hymns.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>61</sup> From this letter it seems likely that Sabine did forget to enclose the photo of Melton Fisher's portrait with the letter of 1 January 1921. See letters XX and XXI.

<sup>62</sup> The Cambridge MA Hood is of black cloth bound and lined in white silk.

<sup>63</sup> Rector, East Mersea from 1871 to 1881.

**Letter XXIII:**<sup>64</sup>**Original manuscript letter No. 4**<sup>65</sup>*An undated note but undoubtedly early February 1921*

I send you what you ask for at once before your birthday\*<sup>66</sup> – as I dread missing it – my memory is so bad. Best wishes for it, and may you have many more. Oh! The cold is biting and my fingers are numb.

Yours truly  
S. Baring Gould

*Manuscript annotation of her transcription by Evelyn Healey:*

**\*Copy of one of his hymns.**

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<sup>64</sup> A brief undated note on what appears to be half a sheet of notepaper. Although undated the reference to Evelyn's birthday confirms it is appropriately placed in the transcription. From letter XLIV it can be deduced that Evelyn's birthday was 12 February.

<sup>65</sup> The original letter is available.

<sup>66</sup> Manuscript asterisk inserted by Evelyn.

**Letter XXIV:**

Lew Trenchard  
 N Devon  
 26 Mch. 1921

My dear Miss Healey

Thank you so much for the charming picture.<sup>67</sup> It is so sweet and kind to send it to me. I return you every good wish for Easter.

I have been much out of health for some months, and am confined to a milk and egg diet much as if I were a baby again.<sup>68</sup>

It is indeed lovely weather, and I just manage to creep out as far as the green-house to watch my lilies-of-the valley as they come out.

I remain  
 Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>67</sup> It is not possible to deduce the subject or the medium of this picture.

<sup>68</sup> Yet another example of Sabine's recurrent incapacitating ill health during the winter months.

**Letter XXV:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 5**

Lew Trenchard  
 N Devon  
 19 Aug. 1921

My dear Miss Healey

I was very glad to hear from you again, but specially sorry not to have a chance of seeing you this summer; or shall I call it autumn? There is a touch in the air and a faint scent of decay that proclaims the decline of the year. I do so dread the winter with its gloom, coughs and imprisonment in one's room for months.<sup>69</sup>

I made a dash last week to Winchester, to see the Cathedral and to hear the choir. But, alas! the latter had been given three weeks holiday. Then I fell ill with an attack that comes on me occasionally and unexpectedly, and had to dash home. I got as far as Exeter and remained there resting for two days. There I found the boy choristers were laid up with mumps, so there was only very inadequate singing by 5 men, and one of these had a cracked squawking voice.<sup>70</sup>

I reached home on Friday a wiser man than when I left. I had learned that I am too old and tottery to be frisking about the country, at all events alone.

My picture that was in the Academy has come here now that the exhibition is closed; and the trouble is where to hang it, as our wall space is so occupied.

I remain  
 Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>69</sup> As autumn approaches, Sabine was already pre-occupied and possibly depressed by thoughts of approaching winter and his inevitable confinement to his room.

<sup>70</sup> Despite Sabine's uncertain health he had ventured to Winchester where he had succumbed to a recurrent health problem and headed for home, only to find he was too unwell to complete the journey and decided to break his journey in Exeter.

**Letter XXVI:**

Lew Trenchard  
N Devon  
21 Sept 1921

My dear Miss Healey

If you get as far as Okehampton do come on and see me. If you take the train to Bridestowe I will send to meet you there.

I do hope you will have fine weather. I had not set my foot on the Moor since the year 1913<sup>71</sup> till the other day when I drove out to the Dartmoor Inn, Lydford and walked over the down, but I had not the strength to descend into the valley of the Lyd under Jubilee Tor.<sup>72</sup> (*Brat Tor*)

I remain  
Yours very truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>71</sup> In letter XI dated 28 January 1919 Sabine had expressed his expectation that when his son Edward returned home after the war he would soon visit the moor again because Edward *would have his motor car running*.

<sup>72</sup> Jubilee Tor, otherwise known as Brat Tor. Sabine's health seemed to fluctuate markedly and unpredictably. To walk across the Down from the Dartmoor Inn at Lydford was no mean achievement for a man of his age and incapacity.

**Letter XXVII:**

4 Oct '21

I will send to meet the 1. 3 p.m. at Bridestowe, and send you back by the 4.5 p.m. on Monday.

S. Baring-Gould



**Letter XXVIII:**

8 Oct '21.

The trains are not very satisfactory. The dog-cart shall meet you at Bridestowe at 1.20 p.m. and I will put off lunch till 2 p.m.

Then for return there is only 3.5 p.m. this leaves very little time – a mere glimpse of you.<sup>73</sup>

Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

Saturday.

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<sup>73</sup> In letters XXVI, XXVII and XXVIII, Sabine appears to be excitedly planning another fleeting meeting with Evelyn.

**Letter XXIX:**  
**Original Manuscript letter No. 6**

Lew Trenchard  
 N Devon  
 19 Oct 1921

Dear Miss Healey

Thank you so much for the British Hymn Festival book, and for the two copies of  
 Now the day is over. The portrait in "The Kingdom" arrived rather damaged.

So glad you reached Tavy Cleave, but you must have had a very long walk if you got  
 out at Bridestowe station.<sup>74</sup> Widgery was the name of a water-colour artist, who has  
 made numerous paintings of the Moor.<sup>75</sup> He may be alive still for ought I know, but I  
 do not think he is.

You are kind to think of writing to me every month. Of course I shall value your  
 letters. I like to hear all about you and how you are getting on.<sup>76</sup>

I am sorry to say my son returned from town with a fresh attack of heart failure, and  
 this makes me very anxious as you may well surmise.<sup>77</sup>

At last we have rain, but it will take some weeks of steady downpour to reach the  
 springs, that have all run dry.

Did you go down to the bottom of the Cleave, or only look down at the sprawling  
 Tavy from between the rocks?

Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

P.S. No Reminiscences have been published. I have written them and had them typed,  
 that is all. I do not expect to publish in my life time. They are in 3 series of 30 years  
 each. The last 30 has not as yet expired.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> From Bridestowe station to Tavy Cleave would have been 4 miles as the crow flies.

<sup>75</sup> William Widgery died 1893.

<sup>76</sup> It seems likely that Miss Healey's decision to write monthly and Sabine's decision to address her less  
 formally (letter XXX) followed an agreeable if brief lunch engagement at Lew. It is possible that when  
 they met he was invited to call her Evelyn.

<sup>77</sup> Edward, then aged 50, see also letter XLIII. Merriol Almond is not aware that Edward ever suffered  
 significant heart disease. He died in 1957 aged 85. The true nature of his condition in 1921 is not  
 known. There is no evidence on which to hazard a guess.

<sup>78</sup> Presumably this was in response to a query from Evelyn. *Early Reminiscences* was published in  
 Sabine's lifetime, i.e. 1923. It is evident from letter XXXVII that *Further Reminiscences* was still  
 being written or amended in May 1922. It was published in 1925. The manuscript for the 3<sup>rd</sup> volume  
 was destroyed by Sabine's son Edward: Personal communication from Dr Merriol Almond.

**Letter XXX:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 7**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
21 Nov. 1921

My dear Evelyn

I will no longer call you Miss Healey.<sup>79</sup> Thank you for your letter and the enclosures. I have only crawled out of bed to write this note. I have been very ill and last Friday, as the Doctor said I had a “near squeak.”<sup>80</sup> So you must excuse if I write no more than this.

Yours very truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>79</sup> It is not possible to deduce whether Sabine decided to address Miss Healey as Evelyn or whether this was at her request. The greater intimacy was probably prompted by a pleasant meeting in October and Evelyn's subsequent decision to write more frequently, see letter XXIX.

<sup>80</sup> The nature of the ‘*near squeak*’ is not known, but presumably Sabine was seriously ill.

**Letter XXXI:** [*annotated by Evelyn Healey:* **postcard**]

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
13 Dec. 1921.

Dear Miss Healey

Yes. I received your letter on my return from Exeter where I had been staying for a few days; and I go there again for Xmas. I have an aunt there aged 96<sup>81</sup> and this will probably be her last Christmas on Earth, so I wish to pass it with her.<sup>82</sup> I can never forget her goodness to my mother in her last trying illness.<sup>83</sup> When I returned to Lew I found a pile of letters and some had to do with business that needed thought and consultation before answering.

I remain  
Yours truly,  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>81</sup> Marianne K Bond, known as Kate, of 4 Colleton Crescent, Exeter. She would have been 91 in 1921.

<sup>82</sup> It is evident from a letter to Mary Dickinson dated 24 December 21 that Sabine did not spend Christmas with Aunt Kate. Instead he was angry to find that Edward and Marian were with Mary and Harvey for Christmas and he was left by himself at Lew. It is possible that he omitted to inform Edward and Marian of his change of plans. From letter XXXIII it can be deduced he did get to see Aunt Kate around the middle of January 1922.

<sup>83</sup> *Early Reminiscences*. Page 319.

**Letter XXXII:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
20 Dec. 1921

My dear Evelyn

Thank you so much for the little desk calendar which will be before me daily on my table, and be a constant reminder of you.<sup>84</sup>

I send you a photo of a pencil sketch made by Miss C. Mortimer<sup>85</sup> when she was here doing the miniatures of my daughters. I did not know she was sketching me as I read my book. It is not worth your acceptance, but I have nothing else to send you, except my best wishes for a happy Xmas and a prosperous New Year

I remain  
Yours very sincerely  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>84</sup> Describing a calendar as *a constant reminder of you* gives some indication of the importance Sabine attached to this correspondence.

<sup>85</sup> A well-known and charming sketch.

**Letter XXXIII:  
Original manuscript letter No. 8**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
28 Jan. 1922

My dear Evelyn

Thank you so much for your letter and kind congratulations.<sup>86</sup> What an enjoyable visit you must have had to Winchester! I had just as bad luck a fortnight ago when I ran up to Exeter for the week end to see my aunt<sup>87</sup> aged 96 who was thought to be dying, but happily she rallied. In the Cathedral there were no boys – on holiday, only 6 men and one of these with a rasping voice – volunteers.

Apparently now Cathedral choirs get holidays at the same time and to the same length as public schools; and as these holidays occur at Xtnas and Easter and in the summer, the Cathedrals get badly served.

I have such a pile of letters to write to acknowledge, this must be my excuse for a very brief note.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>86</sup> Sabine's was 88 on 28 January.

<sup>87</sup> Marianne K Bond. See letters XXXI and XLVI.

**Letter XXXIV:  
Original Manuscript letter No. 9**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
28 Mch 1922

My dear Evelyn

I am so distressed at the thought of your illness, but am most thankful that you are on the mend. Is it not strange, you were much in my mind about the time when you fell ill, and I prayed for you. There is such a thing as reciprocation in minds and among those who are friends.<sup>88</sup>

We have had much sickness in the house and in the parish, but I have kept wonderfully well, and have knocked about a good deal on foot, as my groom was down with influenza and so I could not use the dogcart. The consequence was that I got rather crippled in my feet and had to go into Plymouth last week to have them put to rights.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>88</sup> The nature of Evelyn's condition is not known. Referring to it gave Sabine the opportunity of expressing how close he felt to Evelyn.

**Letter XXXV:  
Original Manuscript letter No. 10**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
27 Apl. 1922

My dear Evelyn

I was so glad to hear from you this morning as I had been worrying greatly about you and was in doubt whether to write to you at Southsea or at the Convalescent Home.\*<sup>89</sup> There is however one thing in your letter I do not relish, your telling me that you will not be writing to me a monthly letter any more.<sup>90</sup> When one gets old and one's course on Earth is drawing to a close, the few friends that remain of like mind become more and more precious to one.<sup>91</sup>

I leave for Exeter on May 1. My da-in-law<sup>92</sup> is shutting up Lew House and giving holiday for 3 weeks or a month to the servants, so I have been told to shift for myself. I have to go but am only just recovering from a bronchitis attack and have lost my voice. My address in Exeter will be the R. Clarence Hotel, the Close.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

*Manuscript annotation by Evelyn Healey:*

**\*It was a nursing home really, not a convalescent one. E.H.**

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<sup>89</sup> Asterisk inserted by Evelyn.

<sup>90</sup> It is not clear why Evelyn decided not to continue writing monthly letters. It was only 6 months previously, in letter XXIX, that she had volunteered to write monthly. It is evident that Sabine was distressed by her decision but clear from further correspondence that Sabine's plea persuaded her to continue writing.

<sup>91</sup> This is a clear statement of the importance to Sabine of his relationship with Evelyn.

<sup>92</sup> Marian: It is a matter of some interest that, despite *only just recovering* from illness, Sabine is nevertheless *expected to shift for myself*. Perhaps predictably it is evident from letter XXXVI that Sabine was confined to his room for much of his stay at the Royal Clarence Hotel, and unable to accept invitations to visit friends.



**Letter No. XXXVI:**  
**Original Manuscript letter No. 11**

ROYAL CLARENCE HOTEL  
 EXETER  
 May 6 1922

My Dear Evelyn

I was so glad to hear from you, and to hear that you were on the mend and in pleasant quarters recruiting.<sup>93</sup> I really was in trouble about you, I am quite convinced that there is reciprocity in souls, where there is friendship, and that week when you had your operation, I felt so especially in trouble and care about you.<sup>94</sup>

I am in Exeter for three weeks, because the house is being turned up-side down and the servants are given their holiday. So I have to bear being away from my home. There are many friends and acquaintances here who are very kind calling on me, but I am not well enough to accept their kind invitations.

Today we have real May weather, and I hear from Lew that on my return the lilies of the valley will all be in flower.

I remain  
 Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>93</sup> Obsolete term for restoration of health.

<sup>94</sup> Yet another expression of how close Sabine felt to Evelyn.

**Letter XXXVII:  
Original Manuscript letter No. 12**

ROYAL CLARENCE HOTEL  
EXETER  
26 May 1922

My very dear Evelyn<sup>95</sup>

Thank you so much for your letter. What you mention in it strikes me as confirmation of what I have occasionally – I will not say often - felt; when one is en rapport [*sic*] with another in community of spirit, there exists a link that is mysterious but very real.

One of my boys\*<sup>96</sup> – a good dear lad – was in Plymouth, to have his eye removed. I could think of nothing else the day of the operation, and at night I felt – it was no dream – it was too real for that, that I stood in the hospital ward, I could recognise the ward and the bed, and that I put out my hand to the boy's head and gave him my blessing, and then burst into tears. Dreams I never remember, but this was too real to be a dream. Then again his sister was ill of a strained back and had been at home recovering. All at once I felt she needed me – and I prayed heartily and earnestly for her, though I did not know why it was she needed my prayers. Two days after she fell seriously ill again with her back, and there were other troubles in her family – but I do think that my prayers helped. And now, your story is another confirmation of what I have felt that there is a community of souls, and that where there is a bond of love, when one member suffers the other is sensible and feels with it.

I have been unwell all this last three weeks. Really I ought not to have been turned out of my house when only just recovering from bronchitis. But I am better today, and was so yesterday when the warm weather returned.<sup>97</sup> I go home next Wednesday, and shall never again I trust quit Lew till the Day of Judgement. However I have done some interesting work here, I have been examining the Episcopal Visitations, in 1744 the Rector of Lew<sup>98</sup> reported that there were 25 families in his parish and 70 communicants. There was no school in the parish, but the parents were expected to catechise their children, and every Sunday afternoon he catechised in the church to make sure that the children knew their catechism and understood it. He was succeeded by a Rev. J. Vickary<sup>99</sup> who was Grammar School Master at Okehampton 12 miles distant, also rector at Lydford and of Denbury<sup>100</sup> near Totnes. Of course he was non resident, he only catechised at Whitsuntide, and the

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<sup>95</sup> It is to be noted that in this letter Sabine had moved on from referring to Miss Healey as *My dear Evelyn* to *My very dear Evelyn*. What follows suggests that Evelyn had responded positively to Sabine's comments on a spiritual link between them.

<sup>96</sup> Manuscript asterisk inserted by Evelyn in her transcription.

<sup>97</sup> Sabine's resentment at being turned out of his home when unwell and remaining unwell for most of his stay in Exeter seems not unreasonable.

<sup>98</sup> Rector of Lew 1744: John Haviland 1735-1762.

<sup>99</sup> John Vickary 1762-1786.

<sup>100</sup> Evelyn Healey had left a blank in her typed transcription, but had later correctly entered the word 'Denbury' in manuscript. Denbury certainly appears in *Further Reminiscences* and it is probable that the annotation was made when Evelyn had a copy of *Further Reminiscences* to hand and was able to fill the gap in her transcription.

communicants dropped to 17. His successor<sup>101</sup> was also a pluralist and non resident, and the communicants dwindled to 10, although owing to the manganese mines the population was over doubled.

What an instance of neglect and its consequences!

I do think that things are better now owing to the rise and the spread of an earnest spirit. I remember so well when “Those that sowed in tears and bare good seed.” saw little result, and yet now “they come again in joy and bear their sheaves with them.”<sup>102</sup>

I remain, my dear Evelyn  
yours very sincerely<sup>103</sup>  
S. Baring-Gould

*Manuscript annotation by Evelyn Healey:*

**\*I believe it was one of his parishioners, called Martyn, and not his own son.**<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> William Elford 1786-1833. Visitation of 1831. The references in footnotes 100, 101, 102 and 103 are all to be found in *Further Reminiscences* pp 104-5. It can be deduced that Sabine was working on *Further Reminiscences* at the time of this letter.

<sup>102</sup> A somewhat muddled quotation from Psalm 126.

<sup>103</sup> For Sabine, this was an unusually warm signing off.

<sup>104</sup> Evelyn Healey was right. Sabine's 'boy' was Percival Martyn, who is known to have lost an eye as a child after being hit in the eye with a snowball with a stone in it. Percival's sisters were Edith and Emily who married a Mr Gerry. It is not known for certain which of these may have had back problems but Sabine's letter of 4 Feb 1922 to Mr Allen, the regrader, who was asked to send one rabbit a week to *Edith Martyn who does not seem to get much better* suggests it might have been her. It is not known why Sabine might have had special concern for the Martyn family. See letter LXII for more on Edith Martyn the nurse. Personal communications from Albert Spry, Lewdown.

**Letter No. XXXVIII:**

Lew Trenchard  
Lewdown  
14 June 1922

My dear Evelyn

I am so glad to think of you back at home, after your sad trials and suffering. I should have written to you before, but I have been very busy.

The adjoining parish of Thrushelton has been annexed to Lew, and this has entailed no end of difficulties, arrangements, and disentanglements. There are now two churches to be served, so last Sunday I took the whole duty at Thrushelton and sang the psalms and preached in the evening here. This is all very well in the summer, but I dread the winter and the storm and rain. Then there is the visiting which is over a widely scattered district.<sup>105</sup>

Here we are crying out for rain! And the shrubs are dying, and even some of the trees. After roasting hot weather we have now chilly winds.

I remain  
Yours very sincerely  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>105</sup> See also letter XLII.

**Letter No. XXXIX:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 13**

Lew Trenchard  
 N. Devon  
 4 July 1922

My dear Evelyn

Thank you for your brief note and for the Parish Mag. But the notice of you is very, very slight.

So you are out of spirits and want to be cheered up. But how am I to do that? I went up to Exeter on Wednesday to attend the Dedication festival on the Thursday, S. Peter's Day. It was to me most delightful. There was a High Eucharistic service at 11.30 with lights and cloth of gold vestments and full choral; and really a large congregation and many communicants. In the afternoon at 3 p.m. was Evensong and a procession headed by the jewelled cross of the Cathedral, and with the banner of S. Peter preceding the Canons; and they sang, "How bright these glorious spirits shine, whence all their white array" as they wound through the side aisles. In the evening at 8 P.M. was a performance of the Messiah, and it was such a delight to me, as I had not heard the Messiah for 60 years.<sup>106</sup>

As I was going out of the cathedral, a pretty young lady laid hold of me, and said, "The Dean is so sorry not to have met you, but he is away in London." I replied: "Do tell your father how much I am obliged to him for sending me a ticket for a reserved seat."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "the Dean is my husband and not my father"

We are in trouble here my youngest grandson<sup>107</sup> at Rugby is ill with pneumonia and his mother went off yesterday to be with him, and his father goes to see him today from town.

I remain  
 yours very sincerely  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>106</sup> Sabine clearly relished this whole visit to Exeter and the Anglo-catholic services he attended.

<sup>107</sup> Edward, always known as 'Teddy', younger son of Edward, Sabine's eldest son.

**Letter No. XLII:<sup>108</sup>****Original manuscript letter No. 16**

Lew Trenchard

Lew Down

1 Aug. 1922

My dear Evelyn

I am so glad to hear that you are in better spirits, and are really enjoying life once more. Heaviness may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning. But I am sorry that there is no chance of your visiting the Moor – and Lew – this summer, if I can call that a summer which is a muddle up of all kinds of weather.<sup>109</sup>

My parish has been doubled in population, and three times in extent, and with two churches to serve, through the annexation of the adjoining parish of Thrushelton, a sadly dead end unwanted parish where was no resident parson, no squire, and no Sunday school. Many of the parishioners are absolute heathens, so you may imagine that there is much spade-work to be done, and I am so old, and winter coming on that I shall not be able to do all I could wish. However, already there seems to be a revival.<sup>110</sup>

My grandson<sup>111</sup> is better and will return next Thursday week, and his mother with him.

I remain  
Ever yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>108</sup> Numbered by Evelyn Healey out of chronological order.

<sup>109</sup> Sabine had been concerned over Evelyn's health since April 1922. His pleasure at her eventual return to full health is manifest in this letter.

<sup>110</sup> This is a fascinating commentary on the neighbouring parish of Thrushelton. See also letter XXXVIII.

<sup>111</sup> Edward, known as 'Teddy,' younger son of Sabine's son, Edward: See letter XXXIX.

**Letter No. XL:**  
**Original Manuscript letter 14:**

1 Sept. 1922  
 Lew Trenchard  
 N. Devon

My dear Evelyn

Thank you so much for your letter. I am so glad you can confirm the opinion relative to the waste of strength on clubs, platform speech, mothers' meetings etc. I see in today's W. Morn News a photo of a dissenting Minister at Barnstaple who perambulates the streets with advertisement boards strung fore and aft to announce Himself as Preacher next Sunday! Is not that a very wrong thing to do, a preacher glorifying himself, in place of sinking self in the advancement of God's glory.

Alas! I am laid up with throat trouble and loss of voice, and this generally lasts and incapacitates me for at least 3 weeks.<sup>112</sup>

I have not seen "When the winter comes."<sup>113</sup>

Mr. Lane of Bodley Head, I think will publish my Early Reminiscences: but he would not do so till I had boiled it down to shreds. Even now I am not sure that it is not bouillé sufficient for him and the public.<sup>114</sup>

You do not tell me a word about yourself and your health, and I do want to know about that. But I think if you had had any recurrence of your illness that I should instinctively – or spiritually rather – have known it

Goodbye  
 Yours truly  
 S Baring-Gould

**Transcriber's Note:** In the first paragraph of the letter the ink had for some reason bled into the paper to such an extent that several words are now almost illegible even after enlargement. Evelyn Healey had difficulty but probably got the majority of words right, although even she was defeated by the place name. She typed '?Parsonswile,' This did not make sense. The present transcriber was also unable to decipher the word but reference to the *Western Morning News* for 1 Sept 1922 gave the name of the place as 'Barnstaple.'

The wording on the placard was:

TOMORROW IN TOWN MISSION HALL SALE OF WORK AT 2.30.

The caption to the photograph read:

*HIS OWN SANDWICHMAN: Rev. E. T. Austin Barnstaple Town Mission, advertising in unconventional fashion a bazaar arranged to liquidate a debt on the mission.*

Possibly because the wording on the placard in the photograph was indistinct, Sabine, with his poor eyesight, had completely misunderstood the purpose of the placard.

<sup>112</sup> Sabine was once again incapacitated by illhealth. On this occasion 'throat trouble and loss of voice'

<sup>113</sup> In 1922 *If Winter Comes* was a bestselling novel by Arthur Stuart-Menteth Hutchinson. In 1947 it was turned into a film.

<sup>114</sup> A Reference to ongoing preparatory work for publication of *Early Reminiscences*.

**Letter No. XLI:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 15.**

Lew Trenchard  
 N. Devon  
 11 Oct. 1922

My dear Evelyn

I was glad to hear from you chirping such a cheery note. I have been in Exeter. I went there to be out of the way of a “ruction” here.<sup>115</sup> But that is over now.

I shall be so delighted to see you next Spring – if I survive the winter. So far I am quite well, but very shivery and shaky. Now that I am on the verge of 90 I have had the adjoining parish of Thrushelton put on me, so that there are two churches to be served and my population is more than doubled, that I have to look after.<sup>116</sup> This keeps me pretty active. But when November comes I shall remain shut up and leave the parochial work to my curate Arundell.<sup>117</sup>

I remain  
 Yours very sincerely  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>115</sup> The reference to a ‘ruction’ at Lew House, so severe that it caused Sabine to take himself off to Exeter, is intriguing. It is tempting to speculate that he might have been referring to a serious disagreement between Edward and Marian.

<sup>116</sup> The third reference to taking on responsibility for Thrushelton. See also letters XXXVIII and XLII.

<sup>117</sup> Arundell, Gilbert, curate to Sabine Baring-Gould.



**Letter No. XLIII:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 17**

Lew Trenchard  
 N. Devon  
 18 Oct. 1922

My dear Evelyn

I am sending you some prize hyacinth bulbs from Holland to cheer you up. Put them in the dark with wet moss till they sprout, and after that put them in your parlour windows and they will be in flower about Christmas.

I do hope you are on the mend daily.<sup>118</sup> We have had a serious alarm here, on Monday night my eldest son had an attack in his heart again, and we had to send into Tavistock after midnight for the doctor. He has to keep to his bed for three days. Happily last night he slept well.<sup>119</sup>

I remain  
 yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>118</sup> It would seem that Evelyn has been unwell again.

<sup>119</sup> This is the second reference to Sabine's son, Edward, then aged 51, and heart trouble. See letter XXIX. It is again impossible to suggest what the problem might have been. He lived to 85 and is not known to have suffered from any significant cardiac illness.

**Letter No. XLIV:  
Original manuscript 18**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
24 Oct. 1922

My dear Evelyn

I am so glad that you were cheered up by the arrival of my hyacinth bulbs. I seem to know instinctively when any of my friends are in pain, sickness or mental trouble, so I am not surprised by the opportune arrival of those bulbs.<sup>120</sup>

I know Brother Lawrence's little book<sup>121</sup>, I have got it; but I can not say what I think about the relation between the day of his death and of your birth – it was a co-incidence, nothing more.

The cold here is bitter, and the wind cuts like a knife.

I shall be glad to see you again next Spring if it please God to spare me through the winter.

I remain  
yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

**Transcriber's Note:**

**Evelyn Healey's Birthday:** In letters XXIII, IL and L, Sabine sent birthday greetings to Miss Healey in February. Brother Lawrence died on 12 February 1691. It could be deduced from this letter that Evelyn Healey's birthday was 12 February, year unknown. It is now also known that the year of her birth was 1883, not 1891 as might be expected. That would make her 39 years old when this letter was written.

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<sup>120</sup> It seems that Sabine was suggesting that he sent the hyacinth bulbs because spiritually he was somehow aware that Evelyn was unwell.

<sup>121</sup> *The Practice of the Presence of God: The Best Rule of Holy Life, being conversations and letters of Brother Lawrence.* 1605-1691.

**Letter No. XLV:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
16 Dec. 1922

My dear Evelyn

I thank you so much for your kind present of a beautiful calendar for the ensuing year. Do not send me another, this is quite charming and is sufficient for me. Now I shall look forward with much desire to seeing you again in the coming spring or early summer.<sup>122</sup>

I am going up to Exeter for Xmas to stay with my aunt who is aged 96 and will probably not see another Noel;<sup>123</sup> and I shall be at the Cathedral on Christmas Eve when there will be a performance of carols.

I wish you a very happy Christmas and a better New Year than that which has all but passed away and which saw you so suffering and ill.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>122</sup> It is noteworthy that Sabine was looking forward to another visit from Evelyn 'with some desire.'

<sup>123</sup> Sabine did visit Marianne K. Bond (Aunt Kate) at 4 Colleton Crescent, Exeter. See letter XLVI. As in previous letters he again gave Kate Bond's age as 96. In 1922 she was 92 not 96.

**Letter No. XLVI:**

Xmas Eve 1922.

My dear Evelyn

My aunt (Kate) remembers very well Miss Amelia Matheson who married Dr. Hulme.<sup>124</sup> But my aunts in Exeter were Misses Bond and not Baring-Gould.<sup>125</sup> My aunt recalls her harp playing.

I cannot conceive what can be the shilling book of mine to which you allude. I was unaware that I had written and published any.<sup>126</sup>

I shall be at the cathedral this evening for Evensong procession and performance of Carols. I shall enjoy it. Glad that the bulbs are doing well, they ought to push ahead now, most have been brought out of the dark many weeks ago. With best wishes for New Year and complete restoration of health;

I remain  
Yours very truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>124</sup> The identity of Amelia Matheson is not known. It can be assumed from Evelyn's full name, Evelyn Hulme Healey that Dr Hulme was probably a close relative on her mother's side.

<sup>125</sup> Frances E Bond – Fanny and Marianne K Bond – Kate, of 4 Colleton Crescent. See also letters XXXI, XXXIII and XLV.

<sup>126</sup> Several of Sabine's books ran to cheap editions and it was disingenuous of Sabine to profess to be unaware of this.

**Letter No. XLVII:  
Original Manuscript letter 19**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
29 Dec. 1922

Dear Evelyn

You have astonished me with a sight of "Thoughts from S. B-G." I had no knowledge that such a compilation had been made. Neither the compiler nor the publisher had the courtesy to send me a copy. However now I have written for one. I understand the booklet has been out two or three years.<sup>127</sup>

My hand is frozen to an icicle, so no more.<sup>128</sup>

Yours very sincerely  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>127</sup> *The Thoughts from Sabine Baring-Gould*, compiled by H B Elliott, 1916, Holden and Hardingham, London. A delightful compilation of exquisite quotations from Sabine's novels.

<sup>128</sup> Sabine was back at Lew and troubled by the cold.

**Letter No. XLVIII:**

31 Jan '23

The Reminiscences are only of the first 30 years of my life; up to my Ordination.

Excuse card. My letters received are now mounting up to 300, and I have to acknowledge kind wishes.<sup>129</sup>

I am better, getting up today.<sup>130</sup>

S. Baring-Gould.

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<sup>129</sup> Sabine was 89 on 28 January. Responding by hand to 300 good wishes must have been quite a task at that age.

<sup>130</sup> It would seem from this passage that Sabine had informed Evelyn that he was once again 'laid up.' If so the letter referring to this has not survived.

**Letter No. II:**

8 Feb. '23

I wish you very many happy returns of your birthday.<sup>131</sup> I have written to Methuen and Co to send you a copy of my story The Queen of Love relating to the Cheshire Salt Country. It is full of droll situations, but also of tragedy. You must cut out my autograph from one of my letters and paste it in. I am not sure however that the novel may not be like most of the rest out of print. I am better and get out next week.<sup>132</sup>

Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

**Transcriber's Note:**

*The Queen of Love*, 1894, London, Methuen: It is tempting to speculate on what might have persuaded Sabine to choose a copy of *The Queen of Love* as a birthday present rather than any other book? There are indeed droll situations but the overall impression is of the stark portrayal of personalities – some of whom are decidedly unpleasant, - tragic situations and intriguing studies of particular relationships. The relationship between Jabez Grice and his son, Andrew, summed up in the final chapter, chimes with Sabine's conclusions on his relationship with his own father. There is also an amusing vignette in which an older man, Poles, makes a fool of himself with a younger girl but it seems unlikely that Sabine would have wanted to draw attention to that. It is perhaps more profitable to look at Sabine's situation at Lew House at the time the letter was written and to see that there are parallels between the submission of '*Hammer*' Grice to his daughter-in-law, *Ada Button* and Sabine's loss of independence. Sabine's resentment of his daughter-in-law, Marian, is manifest in other letters written during this phase of the correspondence with Evelyn Healey.

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<sup>131</sup> Evelyn's birthday: 12 February. See letter XLIV.

<sup>132</sup> Once more Sabine referred to being 'better' but nowhere did he write from what condition.

**Letter No. L:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon  
12 Feb. 1923

Dear Evelyn

Many happy returns of your birthday.<sup>133</sup> The enclosed will tell "Miss Hickey" why she has not yet received the book. I have written to Methuen and Co to send it to you and not to the mysterious Miss Hickey. I got to church yesterday and today "parishing" for the first time after a month of illness.<sup>134</sup>

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>133</sup> See footnote the transcriber's note to letter XLIV

<sup>134</sup> At last the correspondence reveals that Sabine has recovered from a month of being unwell.



**Letter LI:**  
**Original manuscript letter 20**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 21 Mch. 1923

My dear Evelyn

I saw the paragraph in the magazine you sent me. Do not come in Easter week, the weather is so cold, and vegetation is almost at a stand still. But in June it will be otherwise, and I trust I may be here then. I shall be so very glad to see you again; and know you will enjoy a holiday. Shall you be alone or do you bring your mother with you?<sup>135</sup>

I have been distractedly busy of late correcting the proof of my "Early Reminiscences." Printers' blunders were so many.<sup>136</sup>

I am glad you liked "The Queen of Love."<sup>137</sup>

Now I can not send you a long letter. My fingers are numbed with cold, and I have not much to say except my heartiest good wishes to you for a happy Easter.<sup>138</sup>

I remain  
 yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>135</sup> It can be inferred from this passage that Evelyn had intimated her intention of visiting Devon again in the spring.

<sup>136</sup> It would seem that *Early Reminiscences* is at last getting close to publication.

<sup>137</sup> *The Queen of Love*: A birthday present, See letter IL.

<sup>138</sup> Another example of Sabine's intolerance of cold in old age. See letter XLVII.

**Letter LII:**

Lew Trenchard  
N. Devon.  
24 Mch 1923

My dear Evelyn

Do not think that I wish to exchange the picture you so kindly sent me for another. It is very beautiful.<sup>139</sup> As to Staverton<sup>140</sup> it is a long way from Dartmoor, and lies rather low. How would Lewdown suit you? Mrs Chapman<sup>141</sup> could take in lodgers, she is a nice friendly body, and I could lend you my little carriage as often as you might need it to take you to the Moor which is 4 miles off. Lew Down is in full view of the Moor, 600 ft above the sea and enjoys the breezes from it.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould.

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<sup>139</sup> The subject of the picture cannot be known for certain but most probably a photograph of Evelyn. If so, Sabine's response is yet another manifestation of his affection for her.

<sup>140</sup> Evidently Evelyn had written giving her intention of visiting Staverton in South Devon. In response Sabine, in his eagerness to see her as much as possible, offered inducements to persuade her to use Lewdown as the base for her holiday.

<sup>141</sup> This was probably the Mrs. Chapman who lived at Lion Cottage (formerly South View) in the centre of Lewdown. She was the sister of Charles Davy, the churchwarden. Personal communications from Albert Spry, Lewdown.

**Letter No. LIII:**<sup>142</sup>

29 Mch. '23

If Mrs Chapman can not take you in you would find comfortable quarters at "The Blue Lion."<sup>143</sup>

S. Baring-Gould.

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<sup>142</sup> No address given for this letter. The address would almost certainly have been Lew House. Possibly the missive was no more than a note, but without the original letter, there can be no certainty.

<sup>143</sup> It seems likely that Mrs Chapman was unable to accommodate Evelyn.

**Letter No. LIV:  
Original manuscript letter 21**

Lew Trenchard  
Lew Down  
30 Apr. 1923

My dear Evelyn

I have just had it announced to me by my da-in-law that I must quit this house on June 8, and stay away for a fortnight as two of the servants are going to be given their holiday. So I shall go to Exeter.<sup>144</sup> However I shall leave the carriage and coachman at your disposal, to use as you see fit, and as much as you like.

I hope that you will have fine weather. June is usually a fine month, but fine weather is slow in coming. Yesterday we had sea-gulls flying over the house, a warning of rough weather in store.

Never before have I seen the primroses in such abundance and so large, and the moors are ablaze with gorse. Scarce room for a prickly to show, so thick studded are the blossoms.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>144</sup> In this letter Sabine avoided referring to Marian, his daughter-in-law, by name after she had foiled his well-laid plans to entertain Evelyn at Lewdown. It is not known if Marian had become aware of Sabine's plans or if the clash of dates was a co-incidence. What is evident is that Sabine was not consulted and apparently was not in a position to influence her decisions.

**Letter No. LV:****Original manuscript letter 22.***Postcard to: 74 Elm Grove, Southsea*<sup>145</sup>

I have just seen the landlord of the Blue Lion, and he says that it would be all the same to him if you came on June 7 in place of the week of June 2.

Mrs E.<sup>146</sup> has announced to me recently that the Spring cleaning here is to begin on June 2, when I must turn out of the house for a fortnight.

I remain  
yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

May 4, 1923

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<sup>145</sup> Presumed to be the home address of Evelyn. Postcard LXV written on 23 October 1923 gave a different address in Southsea.

<sup>146</sup> Mrs E. was Mrs Edward Baring-Gould, that is Sabine's daughter-in-law, Marian. Once more Sabine avoided referring to her by name. It is possible that Sabine had suggested to Evelyn that she delay her holiday by a few days in the hope that she might still be at Lew when Sabine returned from Exeter.

**Letter No. LVI:**

Lew Trenchard  
Lew Down  
8 May 1923

My dear Evelyn

Of course you can practice on the organ as often as you like. We are now having lovely weather. I have had to give up preaching altogether, I am no longer up to it. I held on as long as I could, but my voice breaks and I can not recover it, so I have had to withdraw, and leave the pulpit as well as the Altar to my curate.<sup>147</sup>

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould.

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<sup>147</sup> Sabine had finally succumbed to his recurrent loss of voice and given up preaching.

Letter No. LVII (23):

Lew Trenchard  
Lew Down  
31 May 1923

My dear Evelyn

I shall be away in Exeter till June 18<sup>th</sup>, but I have told my groom that he and my little carriage are to be entirely at the disposal of your mother and yourself till my return. It is no pleasure of mine that takes me away.<sup>148</sup>

**I am turned out of my own house by my American daughter-in-law, who is giving the servants their holiday en bloc, with the exception of two who could have managed for one quite well. But it was not to be. King Lear went through somewhat similar circumstances.**<sup>149</sup>

Charlie Dustan my groom will advise you where to visit and make excursions. I really do think that you will have fine weather. Summer seems at last to have set in.

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>148</sup> This announcement implied that Sabine's plans to spend some time with Evelyn at the end of her stay at Lew were threatened by Marian delaying Sabine's return to Lew. Hence the furious denunciation that followed.

<sup>149</sup> This furious outburst is typed in bold in this transcription to indicate that it was omitted, almost certainly deliberately from Evelyn Healey's transcription. See also letters XVI and LXXIII, where similar derogatory passages are omitted from the transcription. It is not known why Evelyn censored her transcription in this way. It is however possible that she was considering publication and feared the reaction of the Baring-Gould family if she did publish such statements.

**Letter No. LVIII:**  
**Original Manuscript letter 24.**

ROYAL CLARENCE  
 HOTEL  
 EXETER  
 13 June 1923

My dear Evelyn

I return to Lew on the 18<sup>th</sup> but it is my intention to run up to Exeter on the 21<sup>st</sup> for the Choral Festival in the Cathedral, going up by the 10.15 a.m. from Coryton reaching Exeter at noon, then having lunch here at the Clarence, and attending the Choral Festival at 3 p.m. and returning in the evening. What say you to coming up also? The expense is not great abt. 10/- will cover all, and it will be a rare treat.<sup>150</sup>

I hope you have been able to take a few drives, and that you are comfortable in the paws of the Blue Lion.

I remain  
 yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>150</sup> This suggests that Sabine's return to Lew did allow him a few days in which to entertain Evelyn. Presumably Evelyn extended her plans to allow this. It is evident from letter LXII written on 29 September that Sabine and Evelyn did visit Exeter and have lunch at the Royal Clarence Hotel.



**Letter LIX:**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 31 July 1923

My dear Evelyn

I am better. I got down for the first time to-day; but am still squeamish about my food. I loath [*sic*] the sight of meat, and can only manage upon eggs and rice pudding. I have not yet been able to get up to Lew Down to see my dear people, but I trust to do so before long.<sup>151</sup>

By all means continue your monthly letters. They afford me so much pleasure.<sup>152</sup>

Are we going to have harvest weather? The whortle berries are ripe on Dartmoor, and the children come back with very blue lips. I am sending out the Three Little Maids of Lew<sup>153</sup> this afternoon to scramble about Jubilee Tor and to black their fingers and mouths.

I remain yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

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<sup>151</sup> It is evident that once more Sabine had been ill and confined to his room.

<sup>152</sup> It is of interest that Evelyn has once more considered either ending or reducing the frequency of their correspondence.

<sup>153</sup> The identity of the *Three Little Maids of Lew* is not known.

**Letter LX:**  
**Original manuscript letter 25.**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 1 Sept. 1923

My dear Evelyn

So glad to receive your typed letter within it not a single fault.<sup>154</sup> Alas! Fox has disappeared for 10 days. We have seen nothing of him, and fear that he has been trapped – So there is little chance of our being snap-shotted together.<sup>155</sup>

As to the sermon I send it you, but it is so badly written that I doubt your being able to make much out of it.<sup>156</sup>

The time for Moor excursions is over now, I actually today have had my fire lighted, as I have such a pile of letters to answer, and typed matter to correct that I shall not be able to get out. But I have done some parishing, not so much as I would like, as I find that since my illness I have lost much strength in my knees,<sup>157</sup> and have a difficulty in getting into my seat by Charlie,<sup>158</sup> and have to be helped up, though not down.

I wish indeed that you could have prolonged your stay here, as on to next year – that is as God wills.\*<sup>159</sup>

I have seen none of the reviews of my *Reminiscences*, except that in the *Church Times*, and that was very kind. I do not know that I care much. I have got beyond that.<sup>160</sup>

I remain  
 yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

*Manuscript annotation by Evelyn Healey:*

**\* (and he willed that we should not meet again E.H.)**

<sup>154</sup> Could it be that Evelyn Healey had recently learnt how to type and was here exercising her new-found skills. Sabine was impressed enough not only to comment on the quality of the typing but, in letter LXI, to enlist her assistance.

<sup>155</sup> 'Fox the Collie' dog was mentioned in Sabine's letter to his daughter Mary dated 24 June 1920.

<sup>156</sup> It is possible that Evelyn had asked Sabine for a copy of a sermon Sabine had delivered during her visit to Lew, possibly Sunday 23 June.

<sup>157</sup> This suggests the illness described in letter LIX was considerably more debilitating than usual. There is much in the succeeding letters to suggest that Sabine's health began its final decline with this illness. The nature of the illness is not known.

<sup>158</sup> Charlie Dustan, the coachman.

<sup>159</sup> Manuscript asterisk inserted by Evelyn in her transcription.

<sup>160</sup> *Early Reminiscences* published in 1923.

**Letter No. LXI:**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 27 Sept. 1923

My dear Evelyn

Can you help me? One of my chapters has been typed and retyped so often that I am positively ashamed to ask my typist to do a renewed patching.<sup>161</sup>

Do you know an experienced typist who could reproduce paper and type like the enclosed? And, moreover, would not be unreasonably long about it?<sup>162</sup>

I remain  
 Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

P.S. I have been ill again, but am now alright<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> See letter LX.

<sup>162</sup> It would seem from letter LXII that Sabine was not expecting that Evelyn herself would offer to type for him – but, on the other hand perhaps he half hoped she might do so.

<sup>163</sup> Sabine had again been ill. The bouts of illness were becoming more frequent.

**Letter No. LXII:  
Manuscript letter 26.**

Lew Trenchard  
Lew Down  
Michaelmas Day  
1923<sup>164</sup>

My dear Evelyn

Fox has never returned.<sup>165</sup> We are convinced now that he has been stolen, perhaps poisoned, perhaps poisoned for the sake of his coat. Whoever stole him, knew to whom he belonged, as my name was on his collar. I feel his loss greatly.

I know the two errors you indicate, one was due to the glazier, the other to the stone cutter.<sup>166</sup>

Now about the typing I have no intent to let you undertake it. You have quite enough to do without that. So I have written to a professional in Town, I shall hear on Monday. The typist who does my work is excellent – but Oh! So slow over the work! I sometimes lose all patience.

If I am alive I shall indeed be glad to see you again next Spring or Summer, and let you ramble again over the Moor.

Do you remember Edith Martyn<sup>167</sup> who dined with us at the Clarence, Exeter? I went into Plymouth last Tuesday to the Church Congress, and called at the S. Devon Hospital and had a talk with the Matron. She spoke highly of Edith as such a good and trustworthy girl, it was early days to say whether she would succeed as a nurse, but she thought she had the making of one in her.

We have not had good weather here but much fog and rain.

I remain  
ever yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

P.S. Your typing should not be so faint.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Michaelmas Day: 29 September.

<sup>165</sup> 'Fox' was the collie dog first mentioned in letter LX. His loss is also mentioned in a letter to Miss Hilda Piper, AL06, dated 6 October 23, owned by Merriol Almond. DRO deposit 5203.

<sup>166</sup> The subject of this comment is not known.

<sup>167</sup> Edith Martyn was the sister of Percival Martyn. See letter XXXVII. She did become a nurse and a photograph of her in her uniform is held by Albert Spry of Lewdown. She was over 100 years old when she died around the year 2000.

<sup>168</sup> Evidently Evelyn continues to type her letters.

**Letter No. LXIII:**  
**Original manuscript letter 27.**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 12 Oct 1923

My dear Evelyn

I am not satisfied with the recasting of my chapter on Paulinism by a professional typist in Town. She has done it in very faint type. Moreover I want to recast a portion of the chapter.

Now I will ask you if you want to undertake it; but only on one condition that you allow me to pay you on the ordinary terms for doing the work. If you will not consent to that I will not send it to you.<sup>169</sup>

I have not been over well of late,<sup>170</sup> and I can not get about now as my little carriage was sent up last Saturday to be repainted and retyred – and the poor fellow was killed in a motor accident the same day. So I have not any idea when I shall get it again. What weather we are having! Such deluges of rain and gales of wind.

I suspect I shall not be able to get out much this winter?

How are you?

I remain  
 yours very sincerely  
 S. Baring-Gould

What an age it seems since we were together in Exeter!<sup>171</sup>

---

<sup>169</sup> After an unsatisfactory experience resorting to a professional typist, Sabine had relented and asked Evelyn to take on a task for him but only on condition she allowed him to pay her.

<sup>170</sup> This passage suggests that Sabine's health was now steadily deteriorating.

<sup>171</sup> 21 June 1923. See letter LVIII.

**Letter No. LXIV:**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 Oct 15, 1923

My dear Evelyn

Mrs B-G<sup>172</sup> and Miss Barnes as well as my son<sup>173</sup> have been absent for a fortnight in Paris, and are only just returned.

I envy you your excursion to Winchester. It is such a delightful old city.

As you thought – I am sealed up for the winter and can not get about. I think your idea of a rough draft is excellent. I will send you the chapter in a day or two.

Oh! What dreary miserable weather! But I see from my window a tree – I think it is a maple that is a dandelion yellow, but the leaves are being shed every day.

I remain  
 Yours very sincerely  
 S. Baring-Gould.

---

<sup>172</sup> Once more Sabine avoids referring to his daughter in law, Marian, by name. It is likely that there was a certain irony in styling his son B-G. Patently if anyone was entitled to be known as B-G at this point in time it was Sabine himself.

<sup>173</sup> Edward was also not mentioned by name but was acknowledged as Sabine's son.

**Letter No. LXV:****Original manuscript letter No. 28.***Postcard to:* Miss E. Healey 13 Salisbury Rd. Southsea<sup>174</sup>[18?] Oct 23 postmark<sup>175</sup>

Just got your letter. I think it will look neater all the paper alike. I fear you will find the copy I sent you difficult to decipher.

What do you mean by "The Sermon on the Cricket"? I can not recall one, but my memory is becoming more treacherous from week to week.<sup>176</sup>

S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>174</sup> The postcard LV written on 4 May 1923 gave a different address in Southsea.

<sup>175</sup> An undated postcard. Oct 23 was all Evelyn could make out. The postmark is extremely indistinct but, after enlarging the postmark on a computer monitor, the present transcriber concluded the date could possibly be 18 Oct 23. This would fit in with the preceding letter and succeeding postcard.

<sup>176</sup> See letter LX. On 1 September 23, Sabine sent a sermon to Evelyn at her request. Presumably it is to this sermon *on the Cricket*, she had referred in a letter.

**Letter No. LXVI:**  
**Original manuscript letter 29.**<sup>177</sup>

*Postcard to:* Miss E. Healey 13 Salisbury Rd. Southsea

Postmark [22] Oct 23

Admirably executed, really only a very few pages will need retyping. S. Paul never was married.

I will return copy tomorrow, but only for just a few corrections.<sup>178</sup>

S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>177</sup> The postcard is badly ink-stained. The present transcriber has relied almost entirely on Evelyn Healey's transcription. The postmark is also indistinct and the date not read by Evelyn in full but when magnified on a computer monitor it can be read as 22 Oct.

<sup>178</sup> It would appear that Sabine was content with Evelyn's typed transcription of his work. The present transcriber agrees with Sabine's assessment of the accuracy of her typed transcriptions .



**Letter No. LXVII:**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 29 Oct. 1923

My dear Evelyn

Thank you so much for the *Spring of the Year*. I do hope I may see it in its reality, with the daffodils, primroses and bluebells.<sup>179</sup>

As for your bill of 5/- it is nonsense. I have given you so much trouble that I send you a fuller payment, so say no more about it. I shall be sending you another chapter ere long for an addition.

I am off for a long drive in the car to visit my eldest daughter,<sup>180</sup> so no time for more.

I remain  
 Yours very sincerely and gratefully  
 S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>179</sup> The nature of *Spring of the Year* is not known. Possibly a sketch or painting of spring flowers by Evelyn Healey.

<sup>180</sup> Mary, then aged 54, and living at Dunsland.

**Letter No. LXVIII:**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 31 Oct. 1923

My dear Evelyn

Very well as you propose 2d per page I sent you chap I. But it does not need retyping except for the introductory part – And I sent chap V for an insertion and conclusion.<sup>181</sup>

I shall be very glad to see you and thank you next year if all be well, and the Spring of the Year brings health as well as flowers.

To-day there is an unwonted round globe like gold in the sky, on looking in the Encyclopedia I find that it is the Sun – a most welcome visitor.<sup>182</sup>

I send the title page of my new book to be prefixed to chap I “The Church.”

I remain  
 Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

**Transcriber's Note:**

There is no publication in the bibliography relating to the book on which Sabine was working with Evelyn's help during the last few months of his life. It was probably never completed and was not published after his death. In box 13 of the Baring-Gould deposit box 5203 are the following typescript chapters of an unpublished book *The Growth of Religious Convictions*

Chapter 2: Miracles. Chapter 3: Paulinism. (3 different typescripts)  
 Chapter 4: Paulinism & Calvinism.  
 Chapter 5: Paulinism & Lutheranism.  
 Chapter 6: The atonement. Chapter 7: Eschatology.  
 Chapter 8: Papalism. Chapter 9: Modernism.  
 Chapter 10: Present and Future.

Chapter I. ‘The Church,’ is missing but the presence of the chapter on *Paulinism*, mentioned in letter LXIII, indicates that this was the book on which Sabine was working. For an old man nearing the end of his life *The Growth of Religious Conviction* impresses as a scholastic work full of challenging ideas and arguments but nevertheless easy to read. This supports the view of the transcriber that Sabine's mental capacity in his final years remained good with no signs of dementia.

<sup>181</sup> It seems that Evelyn and Sabine had at last agreed terms for her to transcribe his work.

<sup>182</sup> Sabine had not lost his sense of humour.

**Letter No. LXIX:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 30.**

Lew Trenchard  
Lew Down 1 Nov. 1923

My dear Evelyn

What have I sent you? I am getting so confused in head that I can not recollect things from day to day.

This that I now commit to the post is chapter I. I am so bewildered that I make all kind of confusions. Excuse me.<sup>183</sup>

Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould

Only Introduction needs retyping I-IV

---

<sup>183</sup> This letter and letter LXX are the first to suggest significant short term memory impairment rather than what would be clinically recognised as confusion.

**Letter No. LXX:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 31.**<sup>184</sup>

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 1 Nov. 1923

My dear Evelyn

I think I have unravelled the puzzle. Oct 31 I sent you chap. V. supposing it to be chap. I.

But chap V does require an addition. And now today I have sent you chap. I. That needs only the Introduction to be retyped.<sup>185</sup>

I am sorry for the muddle, but I send chapters here and there to friends for advice, and get so confused that I do not know whither they have gone.

At last real bright weather, sunshine, and at night a little frost. I keep fairly well and have got about parishing again.

I remain  
 Yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>184</sup> This was the second letter written on 1 November and is clearly a follow up to the first letter.

<sup>185</sup> It appears that Sabine had probably regained some grasp of his recent dealings with Evelyn.

**Letter No. LXXI:**

Lew Trenchard  
Lew Down  
7 Nov. 1923.

Dear Evelyn

I am in great alarm over your illness. By all means, retain the chapters till your recovery. I do want to know how you are getting on. I would have wired you yesterday but did not know from your telegram whether you were gone home, or were in hospital in Portsmouth.<sup>186</sup>

I remain  
Yours truly  
S. Baring-Gould.

---

<sup>186</sup> The nature of Evelyn's illhealth is not known. Sabine's response was realistic.

**Letter No. LXXII:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 32.**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 9 Nov. 1923

My dear Evelyn

It was a relief to my mind to receive a letter from you showing some improvement in health. But, pray, do not bother about my chapters they can wait.

I think Smyrneans is right, the modern inhabitants of Smyrna are smyrniots.<sup>187</sup>

I say over every evening the prayers in the Visitation of the Sick on your behalf, so that you may have the benefit of my wishes and prayers. I know what pleurisy is. I had it as a boy, but I was speedily relieved by the application of a mustard poultice, and when better, and in gratitude asked my mother to let me kiss the poultice.

It is so dark today that I can scarce see to write.

With hearty best wishes for your recovery.<sup>188</sup>

I remain  
 yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>187</sup> Presumably this was a query arising from the chapters Evelyn was typing.

<sup>188</sup> This letter is realistically pre-occupied with Evelyn's health and wishes for a continued recovery.

**Letter No. LXXIII:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 33.**<sup>189</sup>

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 14 Nov. 1923

My dear Evelyn

I do hope that you are on the mend. Your father most kindly has sent me a card to tell me where you are and that you are in good hands. But for all that I am very anxious, and pray daily for you. Your father<sup>190</sup> does not mention it but I greatly fear lest the pleurisy should have led to pneumonia.

**I am in no very flourishing condition myself, and am in sad vexation, my American daughter in law<sup>191</sup> has upset all the rooms on the ground floor and turned them about as for a jumble-sale. I hate to go into them now<sup>192</sup>**

I remain  
 yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>189</sup> Part of Evelyn Healey's transcription is missing.

<sup>190</sup> In Evelyn's transcription she had crossed out *father* and inserted *mother* in manuscript.

<sup>191</sup> Once more Sabine avoids referring to his daughter-in-law, Marian by name.

<sup>192</sup> This paragraph is typed in bold by the present transcriber to indicate that it was omitted from Evelyn's transcription. See also letters XVI and LVII. Sabine seems not have appreciated Marian's efforts at arranging furniture in what she would have regarded as much her home as Sabine's. Presumably he was used to items being where he expected them to be and in his failing, if still lucid, state found change difficult to accept.

**Letter No. LXXIV:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 34.**

Lew Trenchard  
 Lew Down  
 26 Novr. 1923

Dear Evelyn

I do hope that you are on the mend.

Please to return to me the chapter or chapters I sent to you to be retyped. I am very ill and feel as though I were failing altogether. I can not recall any thing about the M.S. scrap to which you allude, but for the last fortnight I have been so incapable of remembering anything.<sup>193</sup>

I remain  
 yours truly  
 S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>193</sup> Sabine's assessment of his failing health was accurate. His described inability to remember the events of the last two weeks did not stop him writing to Evelyn and hoping for her recovery.



**Letter No. LXXV:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 35.**

*Postcard to:* Miss E. Healey 13 Salisbury Rd. Southsea

Postmark 30 Nov. 23<sup>194</sup>

Thanks for returned chapters

Am breaking up. Confined to my bed. Best wishes for your recovery.<sup>195</sup>

S. Baring-Gould

---

<sup>194</sup> The postmark is undoubtedly 30 10 23 but the month must have been November as Evelyn recognised in her transcription. Evidently post office postmarks were not always accurate.

<sup>195</sup> It is very evident that despite his own grave state he still finds time to be concerned for Evelyn's health.

**Letter No, LXXVI:**  
**Original manuscript letter No. 36.<sup>196</sup>**

*Postcard to:* Miss. Healey 13 Salisbury Rd. Southsea

Postmark 13 Dec. 23

Many thanks for the Calendar, will be most useful. Still very ill and confined to bed.

S. Baring-Gould

**Transcriber's Note:** There are no more letters from Sabine in this collection. It is reasonable to assume that his health began to deteriorate seriously from 13 December until his death 20 days later on 2 January 1924 just 26 days short of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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<sup>196</sup> The final page of Miss Healey's transcript containing this final letter is missing. The penultimate page is very dilapidated and no doubt the final page simply disintegrated and disappeared or was discarded. At some point a hurried pencilled transcription all in upper case was written immediately under the penultimate letter LXXV. It is not possible to deduce whether this was written by Evelyn.

**Appendix A**  
**The Olwen Peck Collection**  
**Contents**

## Appendix A

### THE FULL OLWEN PECK COLLECTION

#### **1-36: ORIGINAL LETTERS BY SABINE BARING-GOULD**

**Original letters and postcards** written by Sabine Baring-Gould to Evelyn Healey between 1917 and 1923. The whereabouts of the other 40 letters is unknown.

**37: TRANSCRIPTION: 48 pages of transcription of a total of 76 letters from Sabine Baring-Gould to Evelyn Healey.** These transcriptions were undoubtedly typed and annotated by Evelyn Healey herself.

#### **OTHER ARTEFACTS IN THIS COLLECTION:**

**38: Letter from the Rev Kingdon, Bridgerule, Holsworthy to ‘Miss Healey’** dated 16 –10- 53. Thanking her for a letter and confirming he saw a letter in Western Morning News. This appears to be of no relevance to Sabine’s correspondence with Evelyn Healey apart from indicating, when item 42, a letter to Gerard Young, is also taken into account, that Evelyn Healey was inclined to conduct correspondences with other well known figures.

**39: Magazine cutting annotated C.L. 12/1/78:** Subject ‘Curious Myths of the Middle Ages’ by Sabine, and referring to the story of the wandering Jew.

**40: Newspaper Cutting ‘This Man of many Parts’** by Harry F. Fenton. Newspaper not identifiable. Annotated 1982? An inaccurate summary of Sabine’s life. Also other newspaper cuttings referring to Sabine’s work.

**41: Letters from Wesley Colwell: 1. Decr 27,** year not given, to Mrs Peck and paying for photocopies of SBG letters. In reality these were carbon copies, not photocopies, of the Healey transcription of letters. **2. 24 March 1986,** acknowledging receipt of the copies. **3.** Two further undated letters and a list of Sabine’s works held by WW Colwell Jan 1986.

**42: Letter from Gerard Young (A writer from Bognor Regis) to Miss Healey. 12 Dec.** No year given but from mention of Lynmouth Floods 2 years previously must be 1954. The letter indicates an ongoing correspondence that might have been similar to the one with Sabine. Reminisces about Bognor but also Devon, Stoke Gabriel and Paignton.

**43: Typewritten piece about Stoke Gabriel entitled ‘Down by Dartside’** Undated. Annotated in an unknown hand referring to a visit to Devon in 1926 or 27. The handwriting does not correspond with that of Sabine Baring-Gould, Evelyn Healey, Gerard Young, The Rev Kingdon or Wesley Colwell.

**44: Guide to the Church of St Mary and St. Gabriel, Stoke Gabriel.**

**45: Article from ‘Home Words’ Sept 1951 on ‘The Harvest Festival Church’** by the Rev. Konrad Rees and about the Rev. Stephen Hawker and Morwenstowe church.

**46: Letter from Lady Sayer dated 29 January 1979**, in reply to a letter from Mrs Peck, stating the Dartmoor Preservation Society would be interested in the collection of letters by Sabine if it dealt with Dartmoor matters.

**47: Letter from Sally Briggs, (Sabine's great granddaughter,) Manager, Lew House Hotel dated 24 September 1981**, thanking Mrs Peck for her very kind offer of the letters and postcards but regretting the Hotel already had so much of Sabine's letters and writing that it could not cope with any more.

**48: Letter from Lady Sayer to Mrs Peck dated 4 December 1986**, in response to an approach to Lady Sayer by Wesley Colwell informing her that Mrs Peck was *willing to part with the collection of letters to an organisation of responsibility and standing*. According to Professor Dickinson by the time Mrs. Peck received this letter, she was too ill to respond.

**49: The Fox's Prophecy.** A poem by an unknown author, published 1871, republished by Joan Priestley (Sabine's daughter) Sidmouth 1957. Annotated as being found by Vinitia Bogers among the papers of the late Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould at Lewtrenchard. A further annotation in an unknown hand. (Possibly Olwen Peck) stating that Vinitia Bogers died in 1979 aged 89. No other information is available concerning Vinitia Bogers.

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