

# Wakeford Songs

## I – By Train

Mezzo-Soprano & Piano

Duration: approx. 4 mins

*Based on the letters of Muriel Wakeford*

Melody Eötvös

# Muriel Wakeford

was a nurse from Wollongong, Australia and one of only eight women at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915. From her position aboard the hospital ship, the *Gascon*, she was one of the people who witnessed the deadly and bloody assault that morning.

As a prolific writer, her letters document many gruesome details from 1915, as well as openly opposing politics with her strong attitude against censorship and her brave refusal to guard her written words.

This song *By Train* follows Muriel's arrival in Egypt by train, and portrays the counterpoint of emotions and thoughts she was experiencing – excitement at travelling to and being in an exotic country, sadness for the coming war and inevitable loss of life, and hope that as a nurse she can be there to save as many of those lives as possible. Wakeford is now a recognized heroine, namely for her unflinching bravery during those eight months at Gallipoli, and for her many years of service that followed afterwards. Her first letters were published in the *Illawarra Mercury* (June 1915), *By Train* being dated from January 1<sup>st</sup> 1915.

This is the first song in a cycle of five. All text is in the public domain.

## I - By Train

*21st January*

*"We came by special train from Alexandria to Cairo, and I'm glad we shall have the opportunity to look after our own boys, when the expected fighting arrives, which must be before long. From my bedroom window I can see the Pyramids, in fact I could almost hit one with a stone."*

Composed in honor of the ANZACS

# Wakeford Songs

## I - By train

Melody Eötvös

(Text from Muriel Wakeford's letters)

Mezzo-soprano  $\text{♩} = 72$  Cautiously

Piano  $\text{♩} = 72$  Cautiously

*mp* *pp* *mp*

*ppp*  
Péd.

Pno.

*pp* *mp* *f* *mf* *mp*

Péd.

**A**  $\text{♩} = 60$  Like a hurtling train

Pno.

*p* *mp* *f sub p*

RH.

Péd.

Pno.

*f sub p*

Péd.

13

Pno.

*mp*

16

Pno.

*f*

18

Pno.

*mp*

20

**B** *With nervous excitement*  
*mf*

M-S.

We came by \_\_\_\_\_ We came by \_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

*p*

*pp*

*mp*

38

M-S. *the ex - - pect-ed fight - ing ar - rives*

Pno. *p mp ppp mp*

41

M-S. *Which must*

Pno. *ppp mf mp f mp*

**E**

44

M-S. *be Which must*

Pno. *ppp p ppp mp*

*15<sup>ma</sup>*

M-S. 46 **F** be Be - - fore <sup>3</sup>too.

Pno. (15) **F** *mp* *pp mp* *mp*

M-S. 48 be - - fore

Pno. *pp* *mp*

M-S. 50 *mf* *f* too long

Pno. *f*