Lady Mildred Jessup's *Etelinda*

Russell Burdekin, August, 2022

This article had its origins in a paper given at the "Musical Women in Europe in the Long 19th Century" held at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, on 24-26 February, 2020. An article, "Lady of the Winding Stair", based on that was then published in *Opera* magazine (Vol. 72, No. 9, September 2021, pp. 1114 – 1121). That article has now been expanded following further research and full references included.

Amongst the many forgotten composers of the 19th century, surely one of the most intriguing is Lady Mildred Marion Bowes-Lyon Jessup, the present Queen's great aunt. Even the *Grove Encyclopaedia* makes no mention. Only one work by her is extant, her opera *Etelinda*. This premiered on 3 April 1894 in Florence but then lay forgotten until its revival by Classical Musicians Scotland with a concert of excerpts at Glamis Castle in April 2019 and then in Glasgow in November 2019.



Lady Mildred Jessup
(www.internetculturale.it)

Mildred was the 8th child and 2nd daughter of the 13th Earl and Countess of Strathmore and Kinghorne and was born at Glamis Castle on 6 October 1868. Her mother was a fine pianist and encouraged her three daughters' musical abilities appearing at charity concerts with them, although not always including Mildred, probably on account of what was described in newspapers as her "delicate health".[1] This culminated in her spending the autumn of 1888 receiving treatment at a nursing home in London followed by decamping to Egypt with several of the family for the winter and then to India the following winter. In India, rather unusually, she had her fiancé, Augustus Edward Jessup (Gus), in tow.



Gus and Mildred
(The Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne)

However, she was also described as "an excellent and daring rider",[2] which implied that her health problems were intermittent and that she was sometimes in robust form. The issues around her health and death are discussed in Appendix 1.

Little is known of Mildred's wider musical education. There was a governess, Fraulein Koch, who arrived on 5 January, 1882, and remained on good terms with the family regularly visiting them into the 20th century. She had been a pupil of John Farmer, who was organist at Balliol College, Oxford.[3] In 1886 Mildred also studied with him[4] and possibly with Charles Pearce, at the Trinity College of Music in London, to whom initially she was said to have sent her opera for comment and revision.[5] She was also said to be a pupil of the conductor Leopoldo Mugnone.[6] She does not seem to have attended any musical institution. The family were occasional theatre goers, mainly when in London, with an appetite for operettas and light musical comedies.[7]

An article in *Lo Staffile* (25 May 1894, p.1) claimed that Gus was travelling round Scotland for pleasure and in search of ancient legends when he met Mildred and they fell in love. It seems more likely that she met him when Gus visited Glamis as part of a shooting party with his brother-in-law, the Hon. Bernard Constable Maxwell, with whom he was staying at nearby Brechin Castle.[8] The article also said that she did not become a musician until she met him. This is an exaggeration given her study dates with Farmer but it may be true that she only raised her sights to more ambitious works after she met him. On 1 July, 1890 she married Gus.[9] The marriage was said to be the first between a British aristocratic woman and an American man.[10] The other way round was a well- trodden path as American money shored up decaying aristocratic properties in return for a title.[11]

Gus was born in Philadelphia on 20 June, 1861, but lived most of his life in Europe. His grandfather, also named Augustus Edward, was a scientist and explorer, while his aunt, Clara Bloomfield-Moore was an author and friend of Robert Browning. Thus, he had both a scientific and artistic heritage.[12] His father, Alfred, who had sold up his share of the papermakers Jessup and Moore, died in 1881 leaving a large fortune. Gus used his share to pursue scientific and artistic interests in Europe.[13] As well as two librettos, he published, some privately, two books of poems, two scientific papers and a play, *King Dagrun*[14] He was also interested in psychic phenomena and, in 1897, became an associate of the Society for Psychical Research.[15]



Augustus Edward Jessup (Gus)

In 1893, Gus bought the Schloss at Lenzburg in Switzerland as their principal home and spent a considerable sum in modernising it. This is now a museum where two rooms have been set aside for displays recalling Mildred's time there; you can even have "Tea Time mit Lady Mildred". They had two sons, Alfred and Alexander, but Mildred's health gave out and she died after a brief illness at the age of 28 on 9 June 1897 at Valescure on the French Riviera, where they also had a villa. Gus was to marry twice more before his death in Italy in 1925.


R. TEATRO DELLA PERGOLA

Sabato 7 Aprile 1894, alle ore 20 ½ precise

TERZA RAPPRESENTAZIONE

ETELINDA

Parole di A. E. JESSUP - Musica di M. MARION

PERSONAGGI

ELVEL, Re di Bretagna ..... SAMMARCO Mario

La Regina ETELINDA ..... BOFIDALBA Concetta

Sir CONRAD ..... GALLI Ruggero

Sir LIONELLO ..... RUSSITANO Cav. Giuseppe

Sir OTTO ..... Conti Ettore

Il Governatore

Il Mastro con Sir (paralitico) ..... Scalzi Vincenzo

Un Cortigiano ..... Fiscoli Luigi

Maestro Concertatore e Direttore d'Orchestra

MUGNONE LEOPOLDO

PREZZI

Biglietto d'Ingresso Lire DUE

LOGGIONE indistintamente Lire UNA

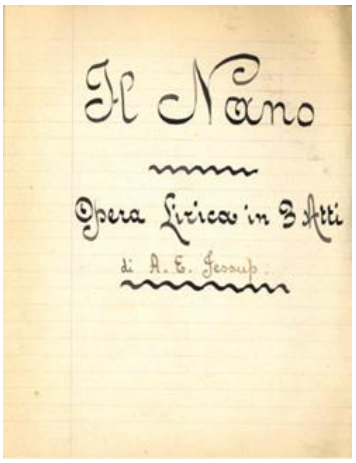
Domenica 8, SERATA D'ONORE della Signora Concetta Bordalba.

Etelinda poster
(The Earl of Strathmore & Kinghorne)

At some point, the Jessups must have heard that Queen Victoria was going to holiday in Florence in the spring of 1894 and decided to try to mount the opera there to coincide, conscious that she would attract a large British presence. Negotiations with the theatre were only completed in early February 1894, Gus and the Earl helping to fund it.[16] The decision might also have been influenced by the fact that the conductor, Mugnone, with whom she had been taking lessons, was due to be at the Teatro della Pergola in March conducting Hector Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* and thus well placed to take on the opera. Mugnone had conducted the premiere of Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* in 1890 and would go on to conduct that of Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca* in 1900. The opera was *Etelinda* and it is Mildred's only opera to have been performed.

Etelinda was premiered at the Teatro della Pergola in Florence on 3 April 1894. The text was stated to be by Gus. It was a through composed, three act, tragic opera set in 9th century Brittany and loosely based on Arthurian Tales of the Round Table but, as Gus made clear in the libretto's preface, finding that he had moved some distance from them he gave it an unrelated name.[17] The plot centred on King Elver, his wife, Etelinda, who is attracted to a new knight, Lionel, who is in love with her, and the king's cousin, Conrad, who is planning to overthrow the king.

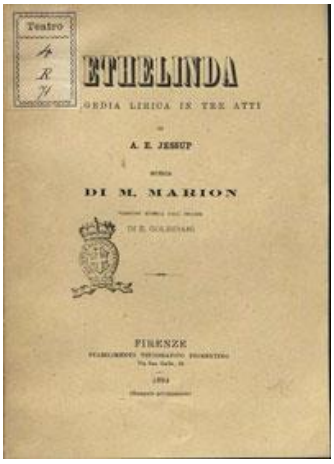
The timeline of the opera's creation is confused. It was supposed to have been created as an English opera, *Ethelinda*, but no trace of this has been found. It seems more likely to have stemmed from an Italian text entitled *Il Nano* (*The dwarf*) written by Gus possibly 10-15 years previously, although this was never acknowledged.[18]



Il nano title page

The text, if it was in English, would have had to be translated into Italian and an experienced librettist, Enrico Golisciani, was brought in to help. He was eventually to write over eighty librettos, including three for Mugnone, his best known being for Ernanno Wolf-Ferrari. A well-regarded group of singers was assembled: - Concetta Bordalba as Etelinda, Mario Sammarco as King Elver, Giuseppe Russitano as Sir Lionel and Enrico Ruggero Galli as Conrad.

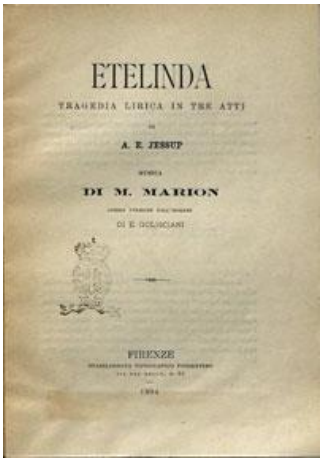
The first public sign of the opera was a privately printed text entitled *Ethelinda* that claimed to be a "versione ritmica" that closely followed the music and was purportedly translated by Golisciani from an English text. It was missing the final scene. However, it seems more likely that this had been written by Gus as it drew heavily on, and in many places was identical to, his earlier *Il Nano* manuscript. This was most probably the text that Mildred set, the cover stating that it was to be set to music by M. Marion. It is possible that Gus prepared an English text from it if Mildred had not been comfortable working in Italian. Either they or possibly Mugnone or the theatre management may not have had confidence in that initial Italian text and so brought in Golisciani to "improve" it. Quite why the earlier, incomplete, "versione ritmica" was printed is not obvious but perhaps Gus wanted to be sure that he was recognised as the author.



Ethelinda title page

A little later the libretto for *Etelinda* was published, a "libera versione" (see below), that Golisciani said was a freer version in more elegant Italian that attempted to evoke the spirit of the original. However, it introduced extensive changes into the final act including a new final scene, minor changes into the second act and considerable rewording of the text throughout. Again, it was said that it was to be set to music by M. Marion but changes and additions would have been required quickly following Golisciani's reworking and it is possible that Mugnone was involved in some of that. The title became *Etelinda* and this is what was performed. Rather unusually for this time in Italy a synopsis sheet in both Italian and English was provided, clearly with their expected audience in mind.

On 24 March, 1894, *The Era* announced that a new opera, *Etelinda*, by the English composer, Mr. M. Marion, was in rehearsal at the Teatro della Pergola with text by a young English poet, Mr Jessup. It was not until 11 April, over a week after the premiere, that the *St James's Gazett*e gave the correct attribution. Thus, the opera's origins were obscure and in fact were deliberately hidden, presumably in case it was a failure. The Earl was much exercised when he heard that someone from Queen Victoria's entourage was going round speculating on the identity of the composer.[19] In the event the Earl need not have worried as the opera was very much a success. He wrote of one group he was with that "all thought opera very pretty".[20]


ETELINDA
TRAGEDIA LIRICA IN TRE ATTI
A. E. JESSUP
DI M. MARION
FIRENZE

Etelinda title page

Most newspaper reports, written, no doubt, by social correspondents there to report on Queen Victoria, contented themselves with just relaying the bare details. One called it "the work of a musical genius"[21] and Mascagni was said to have been delighted with it,[22] but there were some more considered reports. *Le Ménestrel* (15 Apr. 1894, p.118), quoting an Italian critic, said that it was "always elevated, with an austere style, tending towards romanticism, with an overabundance of declamation which can cause a certain tiredness in the listener. Much musical learning and great ease of harmonisation". *Lo Staffile* (15 May 1894, pp.1-2) gave a detailed appraisal of both plot and execution including praise for the main soloists. Its more general conclusion was that "The melody ... caresses the ear and the heart and is gentle and conducted with care and refinement, demonstrating an uncommon skill and mastery of orchestral secrets". The *Swiss and Nice Times* (15 Apr. 1894) wrote that "the opera … produced an immense sensation, and is something very far removed from what one usually associates with the work of aspiring lady amateurs".

The *Musical News* (12 May 1894, pp. 447-448) wrote that the performance "was such as to do full justice to the music" and spoke of Mildred having a "great skill in harmony and counterpoint and possesses a perfect knowledge of the art of instrumentation". It went on:

> The opera is melodic in character, though it keeps strictly to the dramatic development of the play. There is use, but not abuse, of leitmotivs. The melody is not always original but never vulgar, and there is on the whole a certain fluency which testifies to an abundant vein, and to quick comprehension of the subject. The hunters' and peasants' choruses in the first act, and the chorus with organ in the third, are well elaborated and effective, and the one which closes the opera is highly effective. The concerted pieces remind one sometimes of the old forms, but are none the less of remarkable worth. The scene of Sir Conrad's death and the last duet between Sir Lionel and Ethelinda gives evidence of dramatic power, while in the course of the opera there are many beautiful passages full of expression, such as the phrase of the short duet which closes the first act in so effective manner, the appeal of the King to Ethelinda to swear her innocence, and Ethelinda's death.

Elsewhere there were the inevitable remarks that no one would believe it was not by a man[23] and a claim, correct as far as Britain went, that it was the first successful opera by a woman.[24] The Earl renamed his villa in Bordighera, Etelinda, to mark the success, a name that it still has today. The artists and Gus took a number of curtain calls but not Mildred. She did at the second

performance although, according to the Earl, the excitement left her feeling "seedy" and she spent the next day in bed.[25] Mildred was said to have played some items to Queen Victoria probably when the family visited her on 9 April.[26] Queen Victoria's journal for that date referred to the "musical Lady Mildred Jessup".

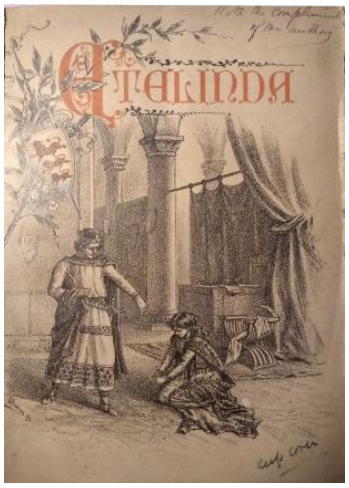
Gus reported on the final performance on 15 April that "the theatre was packed full. Everyone enthusiastic. Confirmed lasting success"[27] but it was not to be. No corroborated reports of any further performances have been found. In particular, there have been claims that excerpts from the opera were given at a concert for Empress Frederick at Bordighera on March 1, 1899 but, even though Mugnone conducted and Gus and Maud, Mildred's younger sister, helped to organise it, this does not seem to be the case to judge from a detailed report in the *New York Herald* (6 Mar. 1899). It was almost certainly never performed again until Scotland in 2019.

The opera's success was probably not striking enough to persuade Italian impresarios to take it on given the competitiveness of the contemporary Italian opera scene, over 70 new operas and operettas being given in Italy in 1894.[28] Without wider Italian success its chances elsewhere would have been slight. There were later press reports of German and Spanish performances and certainly the Earl noted that Mildred had told him that a contract had been signed in Madrid in July 1894 with Mugnone conducting.[29] However, no advertisements for performances have been found and there was no following report from Mildred as to the opera's success or otherwise.

London might have been a possibility for an English version but there is no evidence that this was tried perhaps because of Mildred's health particularly as was soon pregnant with their second child. A thornier question would have been the social reaction to a titled woman being involved in such public music making. Titled women did compose and publish for others to perform but when they performed it was only at charity concerts. They would not be seen being paid to perform. The Jessup's Italian venture was obviously seen as acceptable but that was away from the London gaze and was, from a British perspective, essentially an upper-class entertainment, almost one up from country house amateur dramatics. A performance in London, particularly given the still suspect reputation of the theatre in some quarters, might well have drawn more criticism and there would have been no possibility of anonymity given the Florence performances. She might also have seen *Etelinda* as something of a practice run given that she had sent it to Pearce for review and that by the following year was reported as working on another opera,[30] almost certainly *Falca*. In any case, there was little appetite or potential for new serious English opera in London by the mid-1890s, as both Ethel Smyth and Charles Villiers Stanford found.

The Italian version might have been possible at Covent Garden but again without obvious Italian take up it would have needed a very persuasive effort from the Jessups, who for the sorts of reasons above might not have felt in a position to try.[31] In 1899 Gus and Mugnone planned, unsuccessfully, to bring an Italian opera company to Drury Lane.[32] Perhaps they had hoped to include *Etelinda*, Mildred's death having made any social concerns irrelevant.

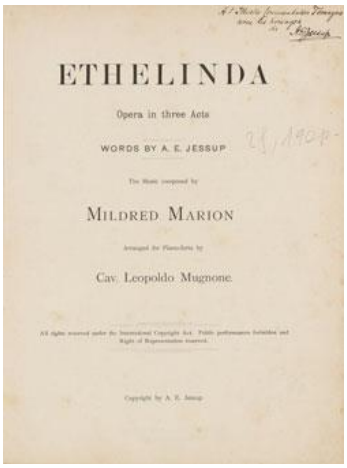
King Elver is married to Etelinda who is attracted to a new knight, Lionel, who is in love with her. The King's cousin, Conrad, plots to poison the King but ends up poisoning himself after the King's jester switches the goblets. Dying, he accuses Lionel, who is away helping a



Libretto cover

neighbouring king, of planning to usurp the kingdom and of being in love with but dies before he can name Etelinda. However, the king soon realises whom he meant and she is unable to deny that she loves Lionel but asserts that she has been faithful to the King. He is unconvinced and orders her execution. In the final act, we find Etelinda imprisoned bemoaning her lot. The King, who is thought to have been killed, enters disguised as a monk[33] in order to try to ascertain her innocence or guilt but is unsuccessful and leaves. Etelinda looks over the battlements and sees someone climbing up the castle wall. Lionel duly appears and pleads with her to escape but she will not because she could not bear the shame. There is then an ambitious choral scene as Etelinda is marched to the scaffold. Lionel volunteers to fight a duel to defend Etelinda's innocence. The King, who has suddenly reappeared, asks whether Lionel will fight him and to stop the bloodshed Etelinda impales herself on Lionel's sword.

The only extant music is an English vocal score by Mugnone entitled *Ethelinda* with the music credited to Mildred Marion.[34] He had gone up to Lenzburg in July 1894 at Mildred's invitation to produce it.[35] The plot reverted to that in the initial "versione ritmica" with the missing final scene largely taken from *Il Nano*. The King is not thought dead and there is no scene with him disguised as a monk. In the final scene, Lionel is brought to the King having been captured attacking the castle to free Ethelinda. He and the King overhear her final prayer and the King realises his mistake, but is too late to stop the execution. While changes being made as a result of a performance were hardly unusual, the magnitude of their scope was, particularly given the opera's success and the fact that "the third act and especially the finale, is declared to be a chef d'oeuvre".[36]


ETHELINDA

Opera in three Acts

WORDS BY A. E. JESSUP

MILDRED MARION

Cav. Leopoldo Mugnone

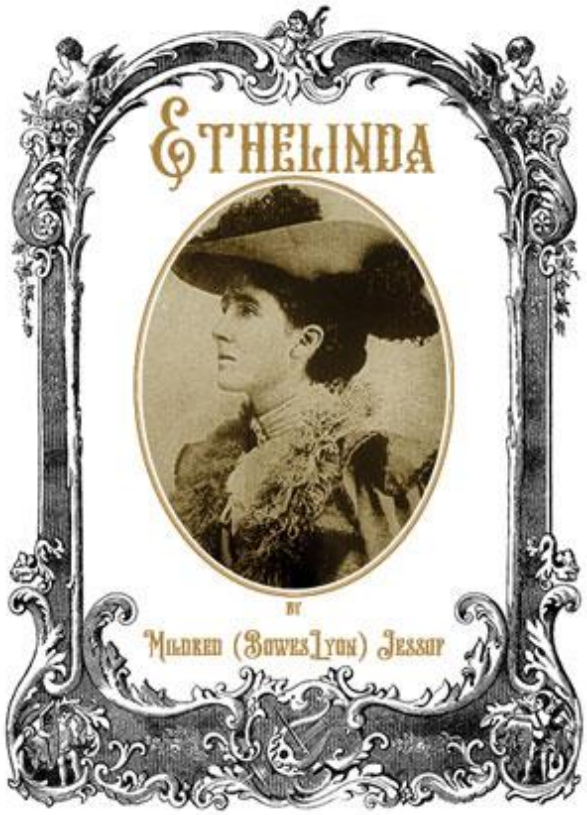
Ethelinda vocal score (Loeb Music Library)

This change, the reversion to the *Ethelinda* title and the switch to English suggest that Golisciani had created the staged final scene and that the Jessups wanted to reassert their authorship. Another consideration might have been because the performed ending with a duel to establish innocence resembled the final scene of Arthur Sullivan's *Ivanhoe*, first performed in 1891 to considerable, but short lived, success. The reappearance of King Elver also had echoes of that of King Richard in *Ivanhoe*. It is not clear what Mugnone used as the starting point for the score. Given the reversion to the "versione ritmica" plot, he might have used Mildred's original score, irrespective of whether that used an Italian or English text, while possibly including sections from the performance score. However, it would seem more likely that he primarily used the Italian performance score, with which he would have been most familiar. In that case the English text would have had to be back fitted, which might account for some awkwardness in places.

The blog accompanying the Loeb music library copy[37] of the vocal score suggests that, given its particular construction with a paper cover, it was produced as a memento rather than as a

practical working copy to encourage further performances. This seems plausible particularly as it is in English, rather than the more immediately useful Italian, and seemingly was not supported with a full score and parts. The copy carried a greeting to "L'Illustre Commendatore Tomagno avec les homages de A.E.Jessup", no doubt a misspelling of the tenor Francesco Tamagno. The following year, Mildred did make efforts to get the opera published in Britain. The *Earl's Diary* (10 Oct. 1895) referred to a letter from Mildred that "Chappell's rep. to decide about *Etelinda* on Saturday".[38] One would assume that this was the vocal score but could have been other, lost, material. In any case the Earl noted nothing subsequently nor is there any record of such a publication, so the attempt was almost certainly unsuccessful.

The Scottish performances referred to above were a concert of solos and duets with piano taken from the vocal score. The singers were Catriona Clark (Ethelinda), Douglas Nairne (King Elver), Matthew Kimble (Lionel) and Francis Church (Sir Conrad) with Derek Clark at the piano. Scottish Opera on Tour also included a duet from the opera on their 2019 tour. The numbers occasionally had the air of Victorian ballad about them but promised enough to welcome a complete performance, as is hoped at some point using a reconstructed score by Dr. Tommy Fowler. Mildred was also claimed to have written an Intermezzo *fantastico*, a Psalm for choir and orchestra and a symphony[39] as well as starting another opera, probably *Falca*, but no scores of these or any lesser works have been found.





Glamis programme - 7 April, 2019
(The Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne)

It is difficult to come to a satisfactory conclusion about Mildred's brief career from what little evidence exists and one ends up with more questions than answers. Apart from occasional factual, rather than reflective, remarks in the Earl's diaries and the comparatively few, usually brief, newspaper and magazine articles, there is little of any substance including no letters to or from her. A rare exception is in the memoirs of the American actress, Mary Anderson, who

described Mildred as "my most intimate friend and a beautiful woman" and how she and Maud had played occasionally at a local Valescure family's concerts.[40] Anderson had given the jewels, which she had worn when an actress, to Mildred on her retirement from the stage after her marriage. The prima donna, Concetta Bordalba, had then used them in the opera.[41]

Mildred was clearly a talented woman who had the ambition to create major works at a time when women usually confined themselves to smaller scale works and who did this at a young age with apparently limited formal training. Yet how did she acquire a "perfect knowledge of the art of instrumentation" without, apparently, any public performances of her works prior to *Etelinda*? Did she and Gus organise private performances? How much help did she get from others, such as Mugnone or Pearce? Why the lack of visibility? Was she inhibited from promoting her work by her gender, class, health or temperament, as seen in her absence for the first night curtain calls? Then how to account for *Etelinda*? Was it the first work that she was satisfied with? [42] Was there a strategy to attempt to forge an operatic reputation in Italy with *Falca* planned to follow *Etelinda*, but thwarted by her untimely death? Was it a vanity project to impress their upper-class acquaintances given the timing and the audience or was it an act of love with Gus and the Earl wanting Mildred to see her opera performed, aware of her indifferent health? What is perhaps more surprising is that, apart from the *Ethelinda* vocal score, there appears to be no trace of any of her music. Gus[43] and their eldest son, Alfred, [44] were both devastated by her death but seem to have done nothing to preserve her work even though Gus later privately published his text for *Falca*, including that the music was by Mildred, while Alfred left money for posthumous publication[45] of some of his poems[46] and scientific papers.[47]

The poem from which Alfred Jessup's book of poems took its title was "The Lady of the Winding Stair" that was inspired by the loss of his mother. Some lines from that convey the ethereal quality that she had for him and leaves with us.

> The day that I was six years old,
> And still an eager child,
> A princess came to me and told
> A story that beguiled
> …
> Whereat she laughed a merry laugh
> I hear it down the years,
> And half (dear God) I smile, and half
> Remember it with tears.
> …
> Though I have never seen her more,
> I know there cannot be
> Another quite so wild and fair
> As that princess who trod on air.

Some further details on the opera, Mildred and Gus can be found at https://www.victorianenglishopera.org/Ethelinda.htm .

I would like to thank Ingrid Thomson, Glamis Castle Archivist, for her valuable help.

Appendix 1 – Mildred Jessup's Health

Mildred Jessup's health loomed large in her short life. Her "delicate health", as sometimes described in newspapers of the day, was, presumably, the cause of her missing various concerts and other occasions that the family organised. This culminated in the autumn of 1888 of some sort of health crisis and Mildred spent several weeks in London for treatment followed up by two overseas holidays in 1888-1889 and 1889-1890. There is then the question as to whether her early death and the events leading up to it were connected to the earlier episodes or entirely separate. There is little direct evidence on any of this history, just a few newspaper stories and the Earl's scattered, laconic, diary entries. The episode with the most material is her 1888-1889 health crisis.

On 7 September, 1888, Mildred took part in a "Ladies v Gentlemen" cricket match and quit herself well.[48] Suddenly, with no prior diary warning entries, less than a month later on 1 October, 1888, the Earl noted "FDS (Frances Dora Smith, his wife) and Mildred left 5.56. Mildred to be under Lyon Playfair. I saw them off". The Countess returned on 6 October having left Mildred in the care of a nursing establishment run by Bertha Moir at Montague Place I London.[49] Nothing about Mildred was then recorded by the Earl, not even a reference to any letters, until 14 November when he received a letter from FDS with a "good account of Mildred", although it is not clear whether she had actually seen her. A week later, the two of them visited Mildred at Montague Place, where she was still in bed. There was no indication that any operation or visit to hospital had taken place. The Earl's diary makes it clear that he paid Miss Moir just under £140 in four instalments for about eight weeks' nursing and Dr. Playfair, £42.[50]

Lyon Playfair was a scientist and politician and a distant relation of the Earl. However, the Earl was mistaken in thinking it was him supervising the treatment. His 5 December entry recorded that the Dr. Playfair was not Lyon and that the Earl had sent an apology. The question is who then was Dr. Playfair. The obvious candidate would be one of Lyon's brothers, William Smoult Playfair, whose speciality was obstetrics and women's diseases, which in Victorian times included mental illness. One of his favoured treatments was the Silas Mitchell bed rest cure, which he introduced from the US. This was used for the rather vaguely defined neurasthenia that covered a wide range of mental health conditions usually including exhaustion in some form and mainly applied to women; Virginia Woolf was later to receive the treatment. The cure consisted of isolating the patient from any friends or family, putting them under "the firm kindness of a well-trained hired nurse" who would not humour the patient's every whim and basically forcing them to rest for several weeks.

Anne Stiles' article[51] describing the treatment includes a paragraph: -

> British implementation of the rest cure sometimes deviated from Mitchell's regimen, although the four basic elements – bed rest, overfeeding, massage, and electric stimulation of muscles – remained consistent. In Britain as in America, most patients were upper-middle-class women diagnosed with neurasthenia or hysteria … Of course, British doctors adapted the cure to suit their own needs and experience. For instance, Playfair prescribed drugs more frequently than Mitchell and advocated foreign travel during the later stages of recovery.

Following her treatment, Mildred, the Countess and Maud (the third daughter) left for Egypt, being joined en-route by the Earl and Constance (the oldest daughter). The *Dundee Evening Telegraph* (11 Dec. 1888) wrote that "In consequence of the delicate health of Lady Mildred-Marion …the family have been practically ordered by their medical advisers to leave Glamis Castle and pass the winter in Egypt."

The bed rest diagnosis fits very neatly with the chain of events: - the lack of visits or communication with Mildred, the absence of any hospital stays or operations, her eight or so weeks' residence in a place suitable to administer such a treatment,[52] the trip to Egypt following it[53] and that William Playfair was almost certainly the doctor involved.

Quite what Mildred was suffering from is more difficult to decide. No symptoms were reported in the Earl's diaries. As noted above, less than a month before going to London, she had taken part in a cricket match so any fatigue cannot have been that debilitating unless it came on very suddenly. The Egyptian trip following the treatment was far from restful with a crowded itinerary that also took in Israel and Syria and lasted six months. There was also the description of her in 1890 as "an excellent and daring rider". The following year, on 15 October, 1891, she was driving a pony carriage with Maud when the horse bolted throwing Maud out but Mildred managed to bring it under control.[54] She also went through two pregnancies apparently without any great alarms. Thus, she seemed to be physically quite robust but hamstrung by these episodes. Perhaps she had some sort of periodic depression or a condition such as anorexia. Given the type of treatment and the need to go to London for it, it would have required some investigation and prior planning to arrange. When he saw her after the treatment, the Earl (21 Nov. 1888) wrote about her being "wonderfully better and looks so nice, like her old self", which suggests that her physical appearance had been affected by whatever ailed her.

Even after the Egyptian trip, Mildred still had problems and, in 1889, her marriage to Gus was postponed "as the doctors are anxious that Lady Mildred, who has for some time been in very delicate health, should spend another winter abroad".[55] This time Mildred, Gus, the Countess and Maud went but not the Earl.

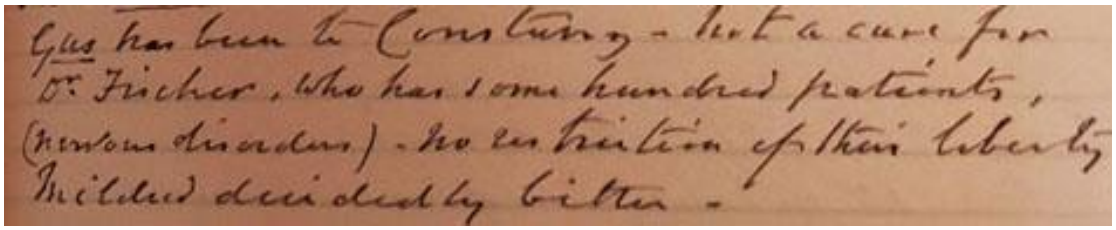
For about six years after her marriage, Mildred seemed to have remained reasonably healthy, although colds were fairly regular. In September 1895 she was laid up for two days with nettle rash, possibly caused by an allergic reaction. Then on 9 May, 1896, the Earl, who was staying at the Villa Etelinda, received a telegram from Gus asking him to send Hamilton (their local doctor) to see Mildred. On 10 May, there was some clarification, "Mildred very weak - fainted when being carried downstairs" and a note from Dr. Hamilton saying that "Mildred very ill". On 13 May, Hamilton seemed to think she was recovering but then there was a telegram that she was dangerously ill and the Earl and his wife left to go to her. By 17 May, the Earl wrote that she was "very weak and ill but decidedly improving". From then on, although Mildred did manage a visit to Bordighera in the October, she never seemed to make a full recovery.

Her poor health continued into 1897 and in May the family considered going out from Glamis to Valescure. She made a will, but by the end of May she was improving. On 2 June, Gus telegraphed "Better night quite out of danger. Will not wire again". On 7 June, the Earl again recorded a message from Gus that "Mildred improving slowly", although this may have been a letter reflecting the situation a few days previously, as the Earl does note denote it as a telegram. On 8 June, the Earl wrote "Terrible tel. from Gus "Mildred had serious relapse,

immediate operation necessary - this has taken place - now hope of saving her, but condition very grave". This was followed on 9 June by "A wretchedly anxious morning until we get the fatal tel. from Gus a little before lunch 'Mildred passed away peacefully this morning' ".

David Watt (*Augustus Edward Jessup*, 1999, "The Death of Lady Mildred Jessup" section) wrote that the cause may have been consumption and the weakness in her last years would support this. However, Mildred's brother, Herbert, had died nearly two months earlier of consumption and the weight loss and long decline, as well as the doctors consulted, as described in the Earl's diaries, do not bear any resemblance to the remarks that he made about Mildred. In October 1895, Gus consulted Dr Symes Thompson, a specialist in consumption, about Herbert but there was never any mention of consulting him about Mildred. The last-minute operation with a hope of saving her would also not seem to fit too well with that diagnosis.

The diaries offer few clues to her condition other than noting the oscillations between being ill and getting better but there is one cryptic entry on 27 July, 1896. The Earl wrote that



Gus has been to Const(anz?) (Konstanz ?) not (?) a cure for
Dr. Fischer, who has some hundred patients
(nervous disorders). No restriction of their liberty.
Mildred decidedly better.

Had Gus been to see Fischer but found that he could not help? If that was the case it would point to there being some sort of mental condition involved possibly relating back to her 1888 – 1889 experiences. Perhaps with "Mildred decidedly better" Gus was putting on an optimistic front and hoping that this time she might be fully restored to health.

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Augustus Jessup's Bibliography

A.E.Jessup, *Il nano*. (Biblioteche di Scienze Umanistiche, Università degli Studi di Torino: GA.MISC.L.4.9 GAT.160, 1870). The item is catalogued as 1870 but this cannot be correct as it would mean that Jessup wrote it aged 9 or 10. Nor is there corroborating evidence elsewhere or in the document itself. However, the handwritten text in an exercise book does give the impression of a youthful work.

A.E.Jessup, music by M. Marion, *Ethelinda*. (Firenze: Stabilimento Tipografico Fiorentino, 1894). This was claimed to be a translation of Gus's English text by Enrico Golisciani that stayed close to the music and was subtitled "Versione Ritmica dall'Inglese di E. Golisciani". It was the initial, privately printed, version. An online version is available at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze at https://teca.bncf.firenze.sbn.it/ImageViewer/servlet/ImageViewer?idr=BNCF00004413745 [accessed 28 Jan. 2020].

A.E.Jessup, music by M. Marion, *Etelinda*. (Firenze: Stabilimento Tipografico Fiorentino, 1894). This was the published libretto and was described as a working of the "Versione Ritmica" into more elegant Italian by Golisciani. It was subtitled "Libera Versione dall'Inglese di E. Golisciani". An online version is available at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, https://teca.bncf.firenze.sbn.it/ImageViewer/servlet/ImageViewer?idr=BNCF00004401221 [accessed 28 Jan. 2020]. There is also a copy in the British Library (System number: 00186835) which includes a synopsis sheet of a different size that would probably have been distributed separately at the performance. The British Library wrongly cites the author as Alfred E. Jessup. Because it was never performed in Britain, no libretto was lodged with the Lord Chamberlain.

A.E.Jessup, music by Mildred Marion, *Ethelinda*. (Leipzig: C.G. Röder, 1895). This vocal score was privately printed. The text is in English. Copies are available in Harvard - https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:427195726$5i and from The Scottish Music Centre.

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A.C. and A.E. Jessup, "The Evolution and Devolution of the Elements", *The Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science*. Vol. 15 (Jan-June, 1908), pp. 21-55.

A.E. and A.C. Jessup, E.C.C. Baly, F.W.Goodbody and E. Prideaux, "The Electrical Forces of Mitosis and the Origin of Cancer", *Biochemical Journal*, Vol 4 (1909), pp. 191 - 232.

A.E.Jessup, music by Mildred Marion, *Falca*. (Firenze: Stabilimento Tipografico Aldino, 1910). Although this was privately printed in 1910, it was almost certainly the new opera that Mildred was reported as working on but probably left uncompleted and so its creation must have been 1894/5. Edward Emley[56] recorded that their son, Alfred, completed the music for an opera written by his father. This was presumably *Falca*. The copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze lists it with music by Alfred C. Jessup, although the document itself only mentions music by Mildred Marion. It is also available at the Biblioteca della Fondazione Teatro Massimo, Palermo.

A.E.Jessup. *King Dagrun* (Perugia: Unione Tipografica Cooperative, 1921)

[1] For example, the *Dundee Evening Telegraph* (11 Dec. 1888), *The Yorkshire Herald* (25 Feb. 1890).
[2] *Teesdale Mercury* (6 Aug. 1890).
[3] Mary Anderson, *A Few More Memories*. (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936), p.40.
[4] *Musical News* (12 May 1894), p. 447, said that she studied with Farmer. The *Earl's Diary*'s monthly summaries for February (£1 11s 6d) and September, 1886 (£6) record payments to Farmer, presumably for Mildred's lessons.
[5] *Musical News* (12 May 1894), p. 448.
[6] *Lo Staffile* (2 Apr., 1894). The article actually wrote "suo diletto allievo" - his beloved pupil.
[7] For example, according to the Earl's diary, in May 1870 and in some cases within a month before her confinement with Maud, the Countess went to several musical parties and plays. Later in September 1870 (22 September – 1 October), the Strathmores hosted a visit by Virginia Gabriel (Mrs March), composer of many songs and operettas.
[8] The *Earl's Diary* entries for August, September and October, 1889, noted a number of visits by parties to and from Brechin Castle. Gus's sister, Mathilda (Tillie), had married Maxwell in 1881 but had died in childbirth a year later. Gus must have continued to stay in touch and was listed as taking part in, at least, some of the visits to Glamis. David Watt (*Augustus Edward Jessup*, 1999, "Lady Mildred Bowes Lyon" section) suggested some other possible avenues. The entry for 3 October, 1889, stated that "Jessup had a talk with me last night", presumably asking to marry Mildred. On 10 October the Earl wrote that Mildred had accepted Jessup. Bernard Maxwell's brother, Walter, was Gus's best man. Bernard and his second wife attended the wedding as did Gus's other sister, Clara, and her husband, Major Heyland.
[9] Amongst the welter of jewellery and similar wedding presents that Gus gave Mildred was a set of Tennyson's works, a pointer to their joint interests. There was a financial arrangement between the Earl and Gus (David Watt, *Augustus Edward Jessup*, 1999, "Lady Mildred Bowes Lyon" section). The marriage was punctuated with occasional requests to the Earl for money, which may have been part of the agreement.
[10] *Dundee Courier* (23 Oct. 1889).
[11] Alfred Dupont Jessup, Mathilda and Gus's father, had tried to fashion a will to prevent the legacy he left Mathilda from being passed to a husband, in order to deter fortune hunters.
[12] A short history of the family and their business, "The Paper-Making Jessups of Augustine", can be found in the *Wilmington Morning News* (11 Feb. 1956).
[13] *The Times* (Philadelphia) (17 July, 1881) claimed that he was studying at Oxford University. However, the "Oxford University Alumni (1500-1886)" database on *Ancestry.com* does not mention him. He did go to Harrow school 1876-1877 (David Watt, *Augustus Edward Jessup*, 1999, "Harrow School" section) as, later, did his sons.
[14] A bibliography of Augustus Jessup's publications is given at the end. His son said of him that he "had the best brain of any man he had met" (Emley – Dürst correspondence, 12 Sep. 1977).
[15] The Earl's diary for 27 February, 1899, recorded that Gus, Maud (Mildred's younger sister) and the conductor Leopoldo Mugnone and his wife conducted a séance. Unfortunately, he did not report what transpired.
[16] The Earl's diary entries for 25 January and 8 February, 1894.
[17] The opera has no connection with Peter von Winter's opera of the same name premiered in 1818 nor with John Old's comic opera, *Ethelinda; or, a philanthropic fad,* whose libretto by Hamilton O. Wylde and Eric Broad was published in 1890, (available online at the British Library) but which does not seem to have been performed.
[18] Università degli Studi di Torino have the item catalogued as 1870 but this would seem highly unlikely as that would mean that Jessup wrote it aged 9 or 10. Nor is there corroborating evidence elsewhere or in the document itself. However, the handwritten text in an exercise book does give the impression of a youthful work.
[19] The Earl's diary for 2 April 1894, " Saw ...Mildred Smith who brought news that Alec Yorke had been saying that *Etelinda* was by Mildred or Maud. M. Smith wrote him a note (indecipherable) to say anything. I took it to Italia – he was not in – said I would call tomorrow". The following day's entry had the rather cryptic "I saw Alec Yorke who promised to do all he could" (perhaps to ensure the opera's good reception?). The Countess of Strathmore's maiden name was Smith so Mildred Smith was possibly a relation. The Earl was referring to the Hon. Alex Yorke who was an equerry to Queen Victoria. As the opera was claimed to be under the patronage of Princess Beatrice (*Daily News*, Apr. 5, 1894), who attended together with her husband Prince Henry of Battenburg, it is hardly surprising that rumours were circulating in the court.
[20] The Earl's diary for 3 April 1894.
[21] *New York Herald* (*International Herald Tribune*) (6 April 1894) report for 2 April.
[22] *The Lute* (1 May 1894) p. 320
[23] *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* (19 Oct. 1895), p 231.
[24] *Hearth and Home* (31 May 1894) p. 79.
[25] The Earl's Diary for 6 April 1894. Her reaction would fit with the assumption that her 1888 nursing home stay was connected with some form of mental exhaustion or anxiety.
[26] *The Woman at Home* (Vol 1-2, 1894), p.324
[27] The Earl's diary for 16 April 1894.

[28] *Le Ménestrel* (Jan 13, 1895) listed 73 new operas and operettas. *Etelinda* was number 35.
[29] The *Earl's Diary* for 7 July 1894.
[30] *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* (19 Oct. 1895), p 231.
[31] The *Earl's Diary* shows no suggestion of attempts to get it performed although Mildred and Gus came to Britain later in 1894 and even though Gus might possibly have known Augustus Harris, who was managing both Drury Lane and Covent Garden at the time. An entry for 12 September, 1890, stated "Gus got telegram from Aug. Harris – went home & to London by night train". Gus was back by the 16 September but whether this was Augustus Harris and what the urgent business might have been was never made clear.
[32] The Earl's diary for 1 March 1899. Rumours also circulated in the press, e.g. *The Referee* (19 Feb. 1899). *Truth* (27 May 1899) wrote of "the abortive project of an Italian opera season at Drury Lane", which seemed to have foundered on a lack of capital. Tamagno was said to have been signed up for the enterprise.
[33] In Jessup's original, *Il nano*, Lionel gets to see the imprisoned Etelinda by disguising himself as a monk rather than by climbing the castle walls as in the opera. This may have sparked the idea for the King's disguise.
[34] The *Earl's Diary* (11 Oct. 1894) referred to a letter from Mildred that "*Etelinda* ready for publication – wants to dedicate it to us", which the Earl was happy to agree to. As the vocal score does not include that dedication, it is possible that other material was produced for publication.
[35] *Cosmorama* (5 July 1894) p.4
[36] *Bow Bells* (20 April 1894) p. 405
[37] Loeb Music Library blog - http://blogs.harvard.edu/loebmusic/2017/03/13/much-ado-about-nothing-searching-for-scores-by-women-composers/
[38] Chappell and Co. was an English music publisher founded in the early 19th century and now part of Warner Chappell Music.
[39] *The Musical News* (12 May 1894), pp. 447-448.
[40] Mary Anderson, *A Few More Memories*. (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936), p.38.
[41] The *Daily News* (5 April 1894) seemed more interested in the jewels' history than in the opera itself.
[42] Interestingly, Gus seemed to exercise such self-criticism. Luther Munday, *A Chronicle of Friendships*. (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1912?, p. 212) said that Gus was "the only man I ever met who refused a *bona fide* offer for his first play" and who claimed that he wrote "for recreation, and that when he satisfies himself, and not until then, shall his work be staged".
[43] "Augustus was in a deep depression after Mildred's death for a long time. We have a testimony from the cook (in German) about the depressed Augustus in Valescure, France. He never left his room and his bed for a very long time!" email from Angela Dettling, Museum Aargau (24 Nov. 2019).
[44] "[His mother's] memory pervaded his whole life", A.C. Jessup. *The Lady on the Winding Stair and Other Poems*. ed. J.M and D.M. de Navarro (Cambridge: W.Heffer & Sons Ltd. , 1957), p.xii
[45] David Watt (*Augustus Edward Jessup*, 1999, Appendix 5 "Alfred Claude Jessup" section).
[46] A.C. Jessup. *The Lady on the Winding Stair and Other Poems*. ed. J.M and D.M. de Navarro (Cambridge: W.Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1957).
[47] Alfred Claude Jessup, *Imperfect Picture*. ed. Edward F. Emley (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1960)
[48] *Dundee Courier* (10 Sep. 1888) commented on both her batting and bowling so she clearly took a full part.
[49] She was one of three sisters but the *Earl's diary* (6 Nov. 1888) made clear that it was Bertha at 16 Montague Place. The 1890 Post Office Directory listed Miss Moir at no. 16. In the 1891 census, Bertha Moir described herself as "Lady Superintendent of Medical Home", although it is not clear if she was still employed at no. 16 as the census recorded her at St. Pancras Infirmary, where her sister, Ellen, was Matron. Perhaps she alternated with Annie Walker who was named on the census form as the "Superintendent of Invalid House" on that evening.
[50] The diary entry for 21 December states the fee as £40 5s but the December monthly summary has £42.
[51] Anne Stiles, "The Rest Cure, 1873-1925". *BRANCH: Britain, Representation, and Nineteenth-Century History* website. Available at http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=anne-stiles-the-rest-cure-1873-1925 [accessed 21 November, 2021].
[52] The 1891 census shows that the establishment had eight "professional nurses" for just eight patients.
[53] The *Earl's Diary* (14 Nov. 1888) briefly noted a letter from his wife in London that "Egypt will do" that suggests a discussion had taken place as to a suitable foreign trip, which Playfair saw as part of the treatment.
[54] According to the *Dundee Courier* (17 October 1891) the horse was brought under control by a passing clergyman.
[55] *Dundee Courier and Argus* (20 Nov. 1889).
[56] Alfred Claude Jessup, *Imperfect Picture*. ed. Edward F. Emley (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1960) p.2.