



The Ballad
of Semmerwater

Edgar Leslie Bainton
(1880-1956)

The Ballad of Semmerwater

North-Country Legend

Deep asleep, deep asleep,
Deep asleep it lies,
The still lake of Semmerwater
Under the still skies.

And many a fathom, many a fathom,
Many a fathom below,
In a king's tower and a queen's bower
The fishes come and go.

Once there stood by Semmerwater
A mickle town and tall;
King's tower and queen's bower
And the wakeman on the wall.

Came a beggar halt and sore:
"I faint for lack of Bread!"
King's tower and queen's bower
Cast him forth unfed.

He knocked at the door of the eller's cot,
The eller's cot in the dale.
They gave him of their oatcake,
They gave him of their ale.

He has cursed aloud that city proud,
He has cursed it in its pride;
He has cursed it into Semmerwater
Down the brant hillside;
He has cursed it into Semmerwater,
There to bide.

King's tower and queen's bower
And a mickle town and tall;
By glimmer of scale and gleam of fin,
Folk have seen them all.
King's tower and queen's bower,
And weed and reed in the gloom;
And a lost city in Semmerwater,
Deep asleep till Doom.

William Watson (1858-1935)

The ballad of Semmerwater

Edgar L. Bainton

Lento ♩ = 48

S *pp* Deep a - sleep, deep a - sleep, Deep a - sleep it lies, The

A *pp* Deep a - sleep, deep a - sleep, Deep a - sleep it lies, The

T *pp* Deep a - sleep, deep a - sleep, Deep a - sleep it lies, The

B *pp* Deep a - sleep, deep a - sleep, Deep a - sleep it lies, The

S ⁵ still lake of Sem - er - wa - ter Un - der the still skies. And *mf*

A still lake of Sem - er - wa - ter Un - der the still skies. And *mf*

T ⁸ still lake of Sem - er - wa - ter Un - der the still ³ ³ skies. And *mf*

B still lake of Sem - er - wa - ter Un - der the still ³ skies. And *mf*

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S ma - ny a fath - om, ma - ny a fath - om, Ma - ny a fath - om be - low, In a

A ma - ny a fath - om, ma - ny a fath - om, Ma - ny a fath - om be - low, In a

T ma - ny a fath - om, ma - ny a fath - om, Ma - ny a fath - om be - low, In a

B ma - ny a fath - om, ma - ny a fath - om, Ma - ny a fath - om be - low, In a

13

S king's tow'r and a queen's bow'r The fish - es come and go.

A king's tow'r and a queen's bow'r The fish - es come and go.

T king's tow'r and a queen's bow'r The fish - es come and go.

B king's tow'r and a queen's bow'r The fish - es come and go.

17

S *poco più mosso* *mf* Once there stood by Sem - mer - wa - ter A mic - kle town and tall; *p* *f*

A *poco più mosso* *mf* Once there stood by Sem - mer - wa - ter A mic - kle town and tall; *p* *f*

T *poco più mosso* *mf* Once there stood by Sem - mer - wa - ter A mic - kle town and tall; *p* *f*

B *poco più mosso* *mf* Once there stood by Sem - mer - wa - ter A mic - kle town and tall; *p* *f*

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21 *dim.*
S King's tow'r and queen's bow'r And the wake - man on the
A King's tow'r and queen's bow'r And the wake - man on the
T King's tow'r and queen's bow'r And the wake - man on the
B King's tow'r and queen's bow'r And the wake - man on the

24 *p* *rit.* *pp* *a tempo*
S wall, the wake - man on the wall.
A wall, the wake - man on the wall.
T wall. Came a beg - gar
B wall. Came a

27 *pp* *rit.* *a tempo*
S "I faint for lack of Bread!"
A "I faint for lack of Bread!"
T *dim.* *p* *rit.* *f* *a tempo*
B *dim.* *p* *rit.* *f* *a tempo*
S halt and sore: King's
B beg - gar halt and sore: King's

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31

S He

A

T
 — tow'r and queen's — bow'r — Cast him forth un - fed.

B
 — tow'r and queen's — bow'r — Cast him forth un - fed.

35 **Più lento**

S
 knock'd at the door of the el - ler's cot, The el - ler's cot in the

A
 He knock'd at the door of the el - ler's cot in the

T
 He knock'd at the door of the cot, The el - ler's cot in the

B
 He knock'd at the door of the el - ler's cot in the

38 **molto tranquillo**

S
 dale. They gave him of their oat - cake, They

A
 dale. They gave him of their oat - cake, They

T
 dale. They gave him of their oat - cake, They

B
 dale. They gave him of their oat - cake, They

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S gave him of their ale. They

A gave him of their ale. They

T gave him of their ale. They

B gave him of their ale. They

44

S gave him of their ale. They gave him of their

A gave him of their ale. They gave

T gave him of their ale. They gave

B gave him of their ale. They

pp *più tranquillo*

47

S oat - cake, They gave him of their ale. He has

A him, They gave him of their ale. He has

T him, They gave him of their ale. He has

B gave him, They gave him of their ale. He has

rit. *molto più mosso* *f*

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50

S
cursed a - loud that ci - ty proud, He has cursed it in its

A
cursed a - loud that ci - ty proud, He has cursed it in its

T
cursed a - loud that ci - ty proud, He has cursed it in its

B
cursed a - loud that ci - ty proud, He has cursed it in its

53

S
pride, He has cursed it in - to Sem - mer - wa - ter Down the brant hill -

A
pride, He has cursed it in - to Sem - mer - wa - ter Down the brant hill -

T
pride, He has cursed it in - to Sem - mer - wa - ter Down the brant hill -

B
pride, He has cursed it in - to Sem - mer - wa - ter Down the brant hill -

57

S
side; He has cursed it in - to Sem - mer - wa - ter

A
side; He has cursed it in - to Sem - mer - wa - ter

T
side; He has cursed it in - to Sem - mer - wa - ter

B
side; He has cursed it in - to Sem - mer - wa - ter

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60 *rit.* *pp* *molto più lento*

S there to bide. King's tow'r and queen's bow'r And a

A there to bide. King's tow'r and queen's bow'r And a

T there to bide. King's tow'r and queen's bow'r And a

B there to bide. King's tow'r and queen's bow'r And a

64 *p*

S mic - kle town and tall; By glim - mer of scale and

A mic - kle town and tall; By glim - mer of scale and

T mic - kle town and tall; By glim - mer of scale and

B mic - kle town and tall; By glim - mer of scale and

67 *dim.* *pp*

S gleam of fin, Folk have seen them all. King's tow'r and

A gleam of fin, Folk have seen them all. King's tow'r and

T gleam of fin, Folk have seen them all. King's tow'r and

B gleam of fin, Folk have seen them all. King's tow'r and

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S
queen's bow'r, And weed and reed in the gloom; And a

A
queen's bow'r, And weed and reed in the gloom; And a

T
queen's bow'r, And weed and reed in the gloom; And a

B
queen's bow'r, And weed and reed in the gloom; And a

74

S
lost ci - ty in Sem - mer - wa - ter, Deep a - sleep till

A
lost ci - ty in Sem - mer - wa - ter, Deep a - sleep till

T
lost ci - ty in Sem - mer - wa - ter, Deep a - sleep till

B
lost ci - ty in Sem - mer - wa - ter, Deep a - sleep till

77

S
Doom. Deep a - sleep till Doom. *calando*

A
Doom. Deep a - sleep till Doom. *calando*

T
Doom. Deep a - sleep till Doom. *calando*

B
Doom. Deep a - sleep till Doom. *calando*

Edgar Leslie Bainton (1880-1956) was born in Hackney, London, the son of a Congregational minister soon moving to Coventry. He made his first public appearance as solo pianist at age nine. He won an open scholarship to the Royal College of Music, studying with Walford Davies and Sir Charles Villiers Stanford. He became piano professor at the Newcastle upon Tyne Conservatory of Music. While attending a festival in Germany, he was arrested as an enemy alien and sent to a detention camp during WWI, in detention for four years. After recuperation, he returned to the Conservatory, touring Australia, Canada, and India. He then moved to Australia as director of the New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music. He was conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. He died in Point Piper in Sydney, Australia. His works include symphonies, orchestral works, works for chorus and orchestra, opera, church music, chamber music, songs, and part songs.

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