

# Whitman's "Dirge for Two Veterans" set to music (3)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Memorial Day, Uncategorized May 26, 2019

*(3rd in a series of posts on Memorial Day)*

*Natalie Foster is a retired Lehigh chemistry professor who is happy now that she can wear t-shirts and jeans every day and not just on weekends*

Gadfly:

Ralph Vaughan Williams set that Whitman poem and several other texts to music for SATB choir in a work called 'Dona Nobis Pacem.' The way he set '...son and father dropt together...' is one of the many places that can bring one to tears. It is a powerful piece.

*[Doing poor man's research on wikipedia, Gadfly found: "**Dona nobis pacem** (English: Grant us peace) is a cantata written by Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1936 and first performed on 2 October of that year. The work was commissioned to mark the centenary of the Huddersfield Choral Society. Vaughan Williams produced his plea for peace by referring to recent wars during the growing fears of a new one. His texts were taken from the Mass, three poems by Walt Whitman, a political speech, and sections of the Bible." Here is a presentation by the London Symphony Orchestra & Chorus. See approx mins. 15:30-26:45 for the dirge.]*

<https://youtu.be/ovBDDfB1s0w>

Shifting gears for a moment — I want to thank you for your posts about the local election. I found them and your comments to people who raised issues to be balanced and informative. I have never felt so well prepared to make choices at the ballot box for local contests. As the bard wrote: thanks and thanks and ever thanks!

A fan of Gadfly (and also of Conan the Grammarian!) —

Natalie