

**PEBBLES ON THE  
SHORE; ALPHA OF  
THE PLOUGH**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649200849

Pebbles on the shore; Alpha of the plough by A. G. Gardiner

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**A. G. GARDINER**

**PEBBLES ON THE  
SHORE; ALPHA OF  
THE PLOUGH**





He mounted the ladder and began to pick the fruit  
*See page 44*

*From Lady Bourinot - Christmas, 1925*

THE WAYFARER'S LIBRARY

Alfred George Gardiner  
**PEBBLES**  
**ON THE SHORE**



Alpha of the Plough



... collecting toys  
And trifles for choicer matters, worth a sponge;  
As children gathering pebbles on the shore



LONDON, PARIS & TORONTO  
J. M. DÉNT & SONS, LTD.  
NEW YORK: F. P. DUTTON & CO.

TO  
ALL WHO LOVE  
THE COTTAGE IN THE  
BEECHWOODS

## P R E F A C E

THESE papers were begun as a part of a causerie in *The Star*, the other contributors to which—men whose names are household words in contemporary literature—wrote under the pen names of "Aldebaran," "Arcturus" and "Sirius." But the constellation, formed in the early days of the war, did not long survive the agitations of that event, and when "Arcturus" left for the battlefield it was finally dissolved and "Alpha of the Plough" alone remained to continue the causerie. This selection from his papers is a sort of informal diary of moods in a time of peril. They are pebbles gathered on the shore of a wild sea.



IRVING H. CAMERON  
307 SHERBORNE ST.  
TORONTO

CONTENTS

	PAGE
ON CHOOSING A NAME . . . . .	7
ON LETTER-WRITING . . . . .	12
ON READING IN BED . . . . .	17
ON CATS AND DOGS . . . . .	22
"W. G." . . . . .	27
ON SEEING VISIONS . . . . .	32
ON BLACK SHEEP . . . . .	37
THE VILLAGE AND THE WAR . . . . .	41
ON RUMOUR . . . . .	46
ON UMBRELLA MORALS . . . . .	52
ON TALKING TO ONE'S SELF . . . . .	57
ON BOSWELL AND HIS MIRACLE . . . . .	62
ON SEEING OURSELVES . . . . .	67
ON THE ENGLISH SPIRIT . . . . .	72
ON FALLING IN LOVE . . . . .	77
ON A BIT OF SEAWEED . . . . .	82
ON LIVING AGAIN . . . . .	86
TU-WHIT, TU-WHOO! . . . . .	91
ON POINTS OF VIEW . . . . .	96
ON BEER AND PORCELAIN . . . . .	101
ON A CASE OF CONSCIENCE . . . . .	106
ON THE GUINEA STAMP . . . . .	111
ON THE DISLIKE OF LAWYERS . . . . .	117
ON THE CHEERFULNESS OF THE BLIND . . . . .	122
ON TAXING VANITY . . . . .	127
ON THOUGHTS AT FIFTY . . . . .	132
THE ONE-EYED CAT . . . . .	137
ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF HATS . . . . .	142

## Contents

	PAGE
ON SEEING LONDON . . . . .	147
ON CATCHING THE TRAIN . . . . .	151
IN PRAISE OF CHESS . . . . .	157
ON THE DOWNS . . . . .	162
ON SHORT LEGS AND LONG LEGS . . . . .	166
ON A PAINTED FACE . . . . .	171
ON WRITING AN ARTICLE . . . . .	175
ON A CITY THAT WAS . . . . .	180
ON PLEASANT SOUNDS . . . . .	185
ON SLACKENING THE BOW . . . . .	190
ON THE INTELLIGENT GOLF BALL . . . . .	194
ON A PRISONER OF WAR . . . . .	198
ON THE WORLD WE LIVE IN . . . . .	203
" I'M TELLING YOU " . . . . .	208
ON COURAGE . . . . .	212
ON SPENDTHRIFTS . . . . .	217
ON A TOP HAT . . . . .	222
ON LOSING ONE'S MEMORY . . . . .	227
ON WEARING A FUR-LINED COAT . . . . .	232
IN PRAISE OF WALKING . . . . .	237
ON REWARDS AND RICHES . . . . .	242
ON TASTE . . . . .	247
ON A HAWTHORN HEDGE . . . . .	251



## PEBBLES ON THE SHORE ON CHOOSING A NAME

"As for your name, I offer you the whole firmament to choose from." In that prodigal spirit the editor of the *Star* invites me to join the constellation that he has summoned from the vasty deeps of Fleet Street. I am, he says, to shine punctually every Wednesday evening, wet or fine, on winter nights and summer eves, at home or abroad, until such time as he cries: "Hold, enough!" and applies the extinguisher that comes to all.

The invitation reaches me in a tiny village on a spur of a range of beech clad hills, whither I have fled for a breathing space from the nightmare of the war and the menacing gloom of the London streets at night. Here the darkness has no terrors. In the wide arch of the sky our lamps are lit nightly as the sun sinks down far over the great plain that stretches at our feet. None of the palpitations of Fleet Street disturb us, and the rumours of the war come to us like far-off echoes from another world. The only sensation of our day is when, just after darkness has fallen, the sound of a whistle in the tiny street of thatched cottages