



# Kathleen: The Life of Kathleen Ferrier 1912-1953

*Maurice Leonard*

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## **Kathleen: The Life of Kathleen Ferrier 1912-1953** Maurice Leonard

The inspirational story of Kathleen Ferrier, whose reputation as the greatest lyric contralto of the twentieth century is something rarely, if ever, disputed, is here told with compelling insight and perception by Maurice Leonard. Drawing on a variety of sources, from photographs, diaries, and private letters, the memories and recollections of those who knew her best, he charts her life from her humble beginnings as a telephone operator in Blackburn, to the height of international fame as one of the world's leading concert artists. Despite having no formal musical training, Kathleen worked with all the celebrated conductors of the time, and is remembered for her performances of music by Brahms, Schubert and Mahler, as well as a handful of operatic roles before her untimely death at the age of forty-one. Enlarging considerably on many alternative biographies, this excellent account captures the warmth, humour and charm of a figure whose astonishing life and career proved to be, sadly, all too brief.

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