

The Poet's Reading of the Trees

THE HAWTHORNE-TREE

By Siegfried Sassoon

Not much to me is yonder lane
Where I go every day;
But when there's been a shower of rain
And hedge-birds whistle gay,
I know my lad that's out in France
With fearsome things to see
Would give his eyes for just one glance
At our white hawthorne-tree.

Not much to me is yonder lane
Where he so longs to tread:
But when there's been a shower of rain
I think I'll never weep again
Until I've heard he's dead.

THE STILL TREES

By John Russell McCarthy

I thank you, Elm and Beech and all my
friends
That live so wisely on the happy hills,
I thank you for your silence. Even a friend
(Especially a friend) must have his moods,
His long still days of dreaming silence spent
In strange communion with his soul and
God.

And you, my friends, have chosen for your
silence
The slow lean months of winter. All the
burdens
And all the joys of this embattled earth
You dare forget, so that your soul and God
May have their hour of studious solitude.

So I, O friends, who walk among you now,
Go searching inward to the soul in me,
And bend my dreams unto the God we
know

I thank you, Elm and Beech and all my
friends
That live so wisely on the happy hills.

THE POPLARS

By Theodosia Garrison

My poplars are like ladies trim
Each conscious of her own estate;
In costume somewhat over-prim,
In manner cordially sedate,
Like two old neighbors met to chat
Beside my garden gate.

My stately old aristocrats—
I fancy still their talk must be
Of rose conserves and Persian cats,
And lavender and Indian tea;
I wonder sometimes as I pass
If they approve of me.

I give them greeting night and morn,
I like to think they answer, too,
With that benign assurance born
When youth gives age the reverence due,
And bend their wise heads as I go
As courteous ladies do.

Long may you stand before my door,
Oh, kindly neighbors garbed in green,
And bend with rustling welcome o'er
The many friends who pass between;
And where the little children play
Look down with gracious mien.

THE LONELY TREE

By Wilfred Wilson Gibson

A twisted ash, a ragged fir,
A silver birch with leaves astir.

Men talk of forests broad and deep,
Where summer long the shadows sleep.

Tho' I love forests deep and wide,
The lone tree on the bare hillside,

The brave, wind-beaten, lonely tree
Is rooted in the heart of me.

A twisted ash, a ragged fir,
A silver birch with leaves astir.