



Canada When

I Was a Girl

—WITH—

OTHER POEMS

COMPOSED BY

Presented to Dundas
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Church  *Market St.*

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CANADA WHEN I WAS A GIRL.

My mother at the spinning-wheel,
With graceful form and handsome face aglow,
Transforming lamb's wool into yarn,
Then knit to warm our toe.

Two pence and three pence for a small loaf of bread,
Sweet sap from the old maple tree,
Three miles to walk for muffins and cakes,
And wild honey from the old bumble bee.

Sago for babies and cradles with rockers,
And sister their burdens to bear ;
Sweet-scented clover and the cow-bells ringing,
Goldfinches soaring in the air.

We whitewashed our houses not with lime,
But with a substance we called blue clay,
And the silly hens, not in the barn,
But in the thistles their eggs did lay.

Churning butter in a bottle sometimes, sometimes in
the round oak churn,
But the cream was rich yellow, out of sight,
As the dasher went up the children would sing,
Come butter, come Jesse, the professor wants
some for his supper to night.

The faithful Spanish dog, Bebsho by name,
Who kept sentinel from doorstep to sty,
And laughs with his tail at his master's return,
In the long happy days gone by.

The old pine tree that spanned the creek,
That our little bare feet pattered o'er,
To gather oak bark to bake our bread,
Which was good for the rich and the poor.

Teaberries and strawberries out in the woods,
 Black squirrels in abundance did roam,
 Wild pigeons from afar, young thrushes in their nest,
 Woodpeckers thought best to stay at home.

Scythes to cut grass, reap hooks to cut corn ;
 The cheese was dried in the sun.
 And pens were made from the goose quills ;
 Turpentine was chewed into gum.

Scarecrows in the garden to frighten the birds,
 The fence was made out of stumps,
 We drank our water from a running spring
 That came down the stream with a thump.

Walking two and three miles to school,
 Studying how to read and speak,
 Snowballing each other out in the road,
 And washing doll's clothes in the creek.

Indians in their wigwams making baskets and mats,
 Papoose on the dirty floor ;
 The old Indian chief with feathers in his hat,
 And his bow-arrow hung over the door.

Making tracks in the snow to the white rabbit snares,
 With bright expectations, to bare
 High in our arms on the cold frosty morn
 The beautiful much cheated hare.

The glimmering light of the tall tallow candle,
 That often beckoned us home, [hearth,
 And the wood burning bright on the old-fashioned
 In the cold, cold winter's gloom.

Gypsies in tents trading horses, and drinking green
 tea.
 Stealing corn from the fields,
 Playing dominoes and cards,
 As lively as gypsies could be.

Stage coaches and omnibuses are seen
 On the streets of every village and town,
 The dinner horn was heard in the golden wheat field,
 And the cherry pie was rich and brown.

Robbers and marauders invested our land,
 From the borders and across the blue sea,
 Putting Canadians to rout on old Gallows Hill ;
 In this land of the brave and the free.

Blockhouses and bayonets called into requisition,
 The old flint musket fired true ;
 Women's hearts fainted, the men were brave,
 But God brought Canada through.

Mackenzie was hung upon a high green tree,
 The cannons then ceased to roar,
 The drums beat loud, and the music was sweet
 From the regulars around our shore.

The old British flag was hoisted high.
 On the twenty-fourth day of May ;
 And the orangemen walked on the twelfth of July,
 In white pants and other true colors so gay.



MUFFLE THE BELL!

Muffle the bell!
 Our little darling is ill, the fever is hot on her brow,
 Step easy, ye loved ones around her couch,
 The angels are coming just now ;
 Her spirit is going to the land of rest,
 Our heads we humbly bow.

Muffle the bell! [given
 A minister of God, his last sermon to sinners has
 And has dropped his mantle for a robe and crown,
 And will soon enter the gate of heaven.

Muffle the bell !
 Dear mother has dropped her head,
 And the light has fled from her eyes,
 While she calls all her children around her bed,
 And to each a blessing supplies.

Muffle the bell !
 The reapers are here
 To cut down the long-standing corn ;
 The sheaves are brown, the grain is ripe,
 The garnerers to adorn.

Muffle the bell !
 The prisoner in the cell
 Will hear the step of the warden,
 His doom is fixed, his scaffold built,
 And he will be hung in the morning.

Muffle the bell !
 A mighty statesman's work is done,
 And his counsel for our country hath past ;
 The bulletins are out, the excitement is high,
 Soon the flags will be down to half mast,

Muffle the bell !
 A sweet woman has fell,
 Fell through the wiles of a traitor ;
 Ye kind hearted sisters, press her close to your breast
 And for your life dare not hate her.

Muffle the bell !
 My beloved is ill,
 Some day I was to be his wife ;
 This ring I will keep while my precious one sleeps,
 I loved him as I loved my life.

Muffle the bell !
 While the cannons on battlefields roar hot and true,
 Lest they awake my lady love from her pleasant
 dreams
 Of her highland lad in kilts of red and blue.

Muffle the bell! [door.
 The poor old tramp never more will come to your
 He was hungry and cold, sick and old,
 But just now he has entered the fold.

I will muffle the bell, though the powers of hell
 May try to prevent the true and the right ;
 With love and faith I will climb up the to the tower,
 Muffle the bell with all my might.
 Curfew shall not ring to-night,



DO I THINK OF THEE.

Do I think of thee ? I do from day to day,
 Sometimes the heart is sad,
 Sometimes the heart is glad,
 And still I think of thee.

Will I ever think of thee ?
 I will when stars shine out
 And babbling brooks their music tell,
 I'll think of thee.

Have I tried not to think of thee ? I tell thee yes,
 Did I succeed ? I tell thee nay.
 It is no harm to think of thee,
 It's joy and peace to think of thee.

And when the heart shall cease to beat ;
 In yonder world where spirits meet,
 There each the other we shall meet ;
 I'll ever think of thee.

THE HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE.

The first woman who walked over it.

We read of Engineer Ridout,
And Engineer Barrow,
Engineer Wingate,
Inspecting the bridge.

Dad Fee had the pleasure
Of being the first
Hackman
To drive across ;
But I was the first
Woman
Who walked over the
Bridge.

With temerity I crossed
The grand structure,
Which span I hope will
Never sever;
Then beholding the beautiful
Farm lands beyond,
I exclaimed,
"Canada forever!"

I hope you will not think
That it is boasting
I am :
But when William Doran
Drove across his span,
I think he was proud of
His protege.

It has been a week ago ;
But I did not know
Until yesterday
That I was the first woman
Who crossed the
Bridge.

THE SULPHUR SPRINGS.

You may gather your apples up from under the trees,
And listen to the goldfinch sing,
And out to the barn to milk your cows,
But give me the Sulphur Springs.

You can sit in your seat and cut your grain,
You can laugh at the old time things ;
Put on your straw hat and crack your whip,
But give me the Sulphur Springs.

You may spin your bicycle over the roads.
Stop at the farm house and sing—
Make love to the pretty Canadian girls ;
But give me the Sulphur Springs.

You can pick your berries and send them to town ;
Sit in the garden and sing ;
And wait for the cash they will bring you home,
But give me the Sulphur Springs.

You can take the Incline to Beckett's Drive,
And listen to the blue jay sing ;
You can gather the bullrushes high in your arms ;
But give me the Sulphur Springs.

Professor Gant can fly his kites with four miles of
string,
"Sunbeam" and "Friendship" may soar high above
the old Point Hill ;
The girls and boys may clap their hands ;
But give me the Sulphur Springs.

When the Toronto. Hamilton & B. comes through,
With a happy, joyful ring,
We'll don our hats—sunbonnets, too,
And we'll away to the Sulphur Springs.

HURRAH FOR DONALD !

O Donald, you have won the road race to-day

Up bright in the morning—

Sweet hope in thy heart—

You leave the Herald office for the fray ;

Hurrah for Donald !

Our own brave Donald !

Who won the road race to-day!

Ye warm-hearted Scots, both highlanders and low,

Adorn him with heather and thistle ;

Take down your bagpipes and sound the whistle !

Hurrah for Donald !

Our own brave Donald !

Who won the road race to-day.

I know the road well—have been around it myself ;

But the distance I never could run !

But brave Donald, regardless of the mud,

Came in with work well done !

Hurrah for Donald !

Our own brave Donald !

Who won the road race to-day.

And may you live long to drink from your cup.

Which you so truly have won—

When weary and tired of running the race,

Turn it over to your Scot son !

Hurrah for Donald !

Our own brave Donald !

Who won the road race to day.

LAKE MEDAD.

Mrs. R. Jackson, of Hamilton, washed her
 Face and hands
 In Lake Medad last Thursday ; the lake and
 Scenery met her expectations.

I write to the lady who gets so weary
 And tired of the household fad ,
 Get out your bicycle—not for a short spin,
 But go out to Lake Medad.

And if you should get hungry on your way out,
 Stop at a farm house and say,
 "The road is not bad but the hills are steep,
 And I must reach Medad."

The good housewife to the cellar will go,
 And bring up to you ice cold milk and shad,
 And with a sweet, sweet smile she will say to you,
 "We love our Lake Medad."

Then you can go to the old peach tree ;
 Look up, and you will see a brave lad,
 So pleased to hand a brown peach to you,
 To help you to Lake Medad.

If I was as pretty and as light as Miss ——
 And her spinning bicycle had,
 I would rise with the sun and off with a run
 To the beautiful Lake Medad.

Go where the Indian girl sang her sweet song of love
 To the paleface man which she thought she had ;
 And the grand old chief sent his arrow straight
 To the buck and doe around our Lake Medad.

Please do not fall in—it is a bottomless lake,
 And it would make my poor heart sad
 If any of my friends from Hamilton went out
 And was left in Lake Medad.

AN ODE TO EX-MAYOR ROACH.

I have been thinking a long while sir, about your
liberal heart and hand ;
Your charities in Hamilton have always been so
grand ;
You have not known men, sir, by their color nor
their creed,
But in their hour of want you have supplied their
need.

When you were elected mayor, sir, our streets were
very rough,
But by your vim and enterprise they are now almost
smooth enough.
You did not forget the heathen, sir, in the lands so
far away ;
But in the missionary box your thousands you did lay
I know you love this country, sir, Hamilton, Toronto
the best ;
But they want some men like you out in the great
Northwest
To help them in their toil of love, to join them in
their prayers,
And in the lovely autumn days to open up their fairs.
May God spare your life, sir, for many more useful
years,
And help you to scatter the beautiful flowers over
the doubts and fears,
And be gathered home at last, sir, to the land that is
free from tears.

LOCKED OUT.

Locked out from home to sigh and mourn ;
 Locked out in sin and sorrow,
 To ride upon the ocean foam—
 Locked out until to-morrow.

Locked out from infant lips so sweet,
 Beneath the silent sod ;
 Jesus came and gently took its spirit up to God—
 Locked out until to-morrow.

Locked out from fame, ambition, love,
 That we so fondly cherish,
 The struggling soul often drops a tear that will never
 perish—
 Locked out until to-morrow.

Locked out of church and state, where peace may rule
 And spread its every border,
 Men's hearts grow warm and their souls be saved—
 Locked out until to-morrow.



FIRE IN THE DRILL SHEDS.

It was Saturday evening and my thoughts were nice
 and still,
 When I saw a fire in the drill shed, very much
 against my will.

Then the fire bell sounded ; then the firemen came,
 And they worked with might and skill until they
 subdued the flames.

I am so sorry for the drill sheds, and the beautiful
 trees,
 And the Virginia Creeper that used to bow to the
 breeze

We are sorry for the red coats, and for Major
Moore's sword ;
For Bandmaster Robinson's music, which we all so
much adored.

But we will soon have another drill shed, and our
flag will float in the breeze ;
Then every heart that weepeth now shall sweetly be
at ease.

God bless our noble chief and firemen with long and
peaceful lives ;
May they enter heaven at last, where there is no
hasty drives.



SUMMER.

I long to walk among the hills
Roam in the fields of clover,
Listen to the bowbells ring—
Then I would believe it summer.

If I beside those babbling brooks
In childhood days could wander,
And gather ferns from the wild nooks—
Then I would think it summer.

And if with those we dearly love
Could walk hand in hand together,
Through life's rugged paths of sin—
Then I would believe it summer.

If I could hear the goldfinch sing
And not one dear woman murmur,
And spy the eagle on her wing—
Then I would think it summer.

Some day we will reach that happy clime
Where there is no change of weather,
And cast our crowns at Jesus' feet,
And know for truth it's summer.

MISCELLANEOUS



SUMMER.

DEDICATED TO MRS. R. JACKSON BY A LOVING LADY FRIEND.

Are you longing for summer, dear friend of my heart,
 For the scenes and companions of yore?
 For the birds and the flowers and green leafy nooks
 That in childhood your feet pattered o'er?

What wonder at times that our thoughts wander
 back.

To the old happy days of the past—
 To girlhood's fair dreams in their beauty and light,
 And memories too lovely to last!

Swift memories of home, of a mother's fond love,
 Of summer days gleeful and bright,
 Of hearts that beat truly—forevermore still—
 Loved forms that are hid from our sight.

O days of our childhood, bright days of our youth,
 Can they never revisit us more?
 Will the pain and the care and the unrest of life
 Be ours till we reach the blest shore?

The gifted have sung of the Sweet By-and-By,
 And the theme is quite glorious we know;
 But the tired heart turns in the autumn of life
 To the spring-time—the sweet long ago.

SAMSON.

Plunged in night, I sit alone
Eyeless on this dungeon stone,
Naked, shaggy and unkempt,
Dreaming dreams no soul hath dreamt

Rats and vermin round my feet
Play unharmed, companions sweet,
Spiders weave me overhead
Silken curtains for my bed.

Day by day the mould I smell
Of this fungus-blistered cell ;
Nightly in my haunted sleep
O'er my face the lizards creep.

Gyves of iron scrape and burn
Wrists and ankles when I turn,
And my collared neck is raw
With the teeth of brass that gnaw.

God of Israel, canst thou see
All my fierce captivity ?
Do thy sinews feel my pain ?
Hearest thou the clanking chains ?

Thou who madest me so fair,
Strong and buoyant as the air,
Tall and noble as a tree,
With the passions of the sea.

Swift as horse upon my feet,
Fierce as lion in my heat,
Rending, like a wisp of hay,
All that dared withstand my way.

Canst thou see me through the gloom
Of this subterranean tomb—
Blinded tiger in his den
Once the lord and prince of men ?

Clay was I ; the potter thou,
 With Thy thumb-nails smooth'dst my brow,
 Roll'dst the spital-moistened sands
 Into limbs between Thy hands.

Thou didst pour into my blood
 Fury of the fire and flood,
 And upon the boundless skies,
 Thou didst first unclose my eyes.

And my breath of life was flame
 God like from the source it came,
 Whirling round like furious wind
 Thoughts upgathered in the mind.

Strong Thou mad'st me, till at length
 All my weakness was my strength ;
 Tortured am I, blind and wrecked,
 For a faulty architect.

From the woman at my side,
 Was I woman-like to hide
 What she asked me, as if fear
 Could my iron heart come near ?

Nay, I scorned and scorn again
 Cowards who their tongues restrain ;
 Cared I no more for Thy laws
 Than a wind of scattered straws,

When the earth quaked at my name
 And my blood was all aflame,
 Who was I to lie, and cheat
 Her who clung about my feet ?

From thy open nostrils blow
 Wind and tempest, rain and snow ;
 Dost Thou curse them on their course
 For the fury of their force ?

Tortured am I, wrecked and bowed,
But the soul within is proud ;
Dungeon fetters cannot still
Forces of the tameless will.

Israel's God, come down and see
All my fierce captivity ;
Let Thy sinews feel my pains,
With Thy fingers lift my chains .

Then, with thunder loud and wild,
Comfort thou thy rebel child,
And with lightning split in twain
Loveless heart and sightless brain.

Give me splendor in my death,
Not this sickening dungeon breath,
Creeping down my blood like slime,
Till it wastes me in my prime.

Give me back, for one blind hour,
Half my former rage and power,
And some giant crisis send
Meet to prove a hero's end.

Then, O God, Thy mercy show—
Crush him in the overthrow
At whose life they scorn and point,
By its greatness out of joint.

Copies of these poems may be procured
from Mrs. R. Jackson, 106 McNab St.
North, Hamilton, Ontario.