

On Active Service

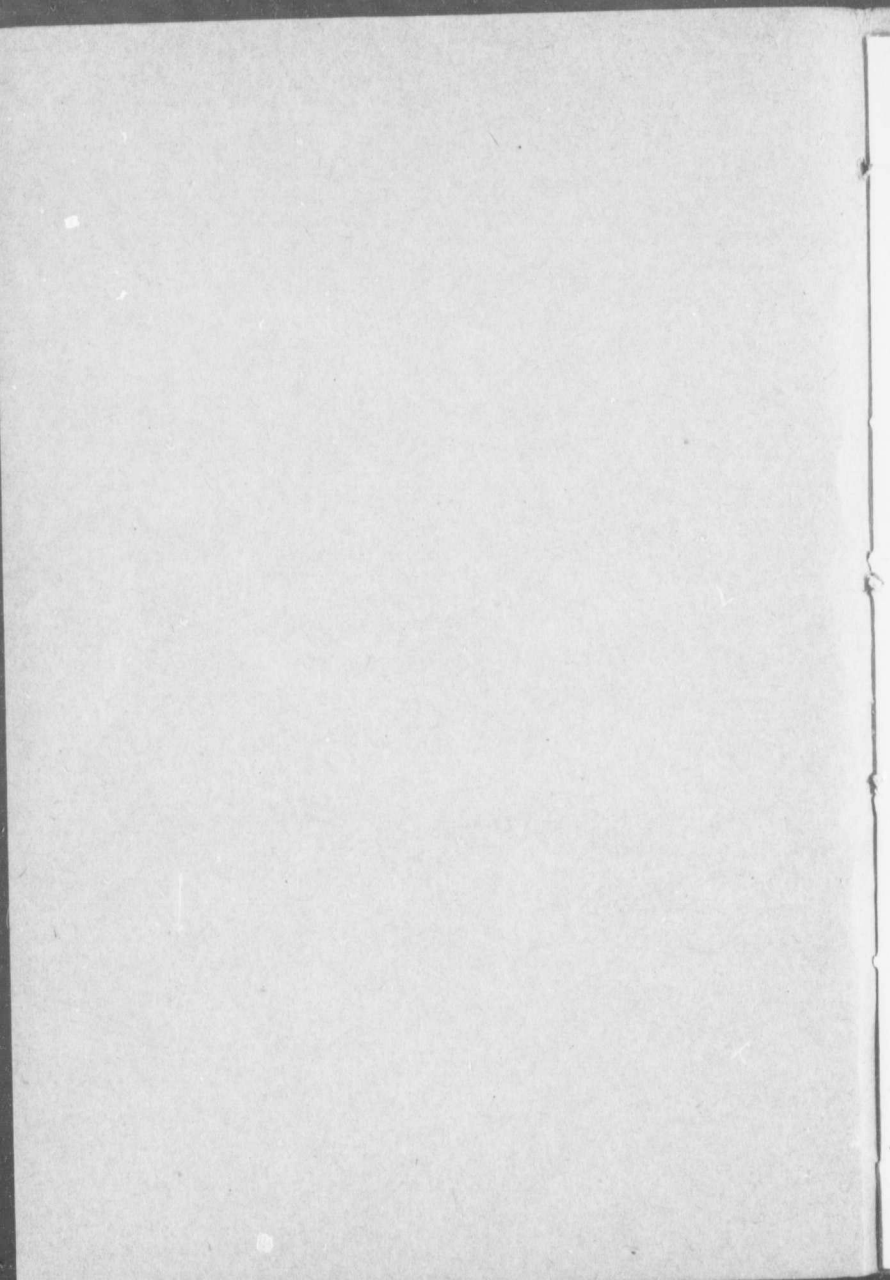
Halcartier '14



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Oliver E. Baillie
Field Artillery
First Canadian Contingent



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THE CALL.

The nations had pledged their honour
That the lamb should not be shorn,
When a shot rang round a startled world,
And a scrap of paper was torn.

And Liège flamed up as a beacon,
A call for help in the night,
Where Belgium fought like a lion,
For Honour, God and Right.

Then roused Britannia proudly,
And her glance flashed o'er the sea,
"Sons I have loved and cherished,
Say, do ye stand with me.?"

"Will we show the Teuton bully
That the bond of the blood holds true,
Who toucheth the mother of lions,
Toucheth the lions too ?"

CANADA'S ANSWER.

From the vales of British Columbia,
From the mill and from the mine,
We have rushed at Britain's peril,
To join her battle line.

From the far edge of Alberta,
Where the solemn Rockies guard
The range of the mighty cow herds,
We have come at Britannia's word.

From the fields of Manitoba,
Where we left the golden wheat,
Ready and waiting the sickle,
We have come with hurrying feet.

And old Ontario's best are here,
From city and farm they come,
In thousands, mother, they heard your cry,
And march to the sound of the drum.

And all the provinces by the sea
Have answered in haste the call,
Ready and armed for fight you'll find
Sons of the Saxon and Gaul.

Our drill may strike you as rotten,
We may fail at the drill sergeant's test,
But you'll find in the day of battle
We can fight and die with your best.

So give us a chance at the Germans,
That's why we crossed the sea ;
To uphold the power of our Empire,
Old England, to fight for thee.

3. A LETTER FROM SALISBURY PLAINS.

Dear sir, these lines will let you know
How things in dear old England go,
And that the source of all our woe
Is not the bloody Kaiser.

We thought at home, when at our ease,
An arbour'd inn, with bread and cheese,
When served by dainty maids, would please
The stomach and the eye, sir.

The bread and cheese, we've found, ah me !
Developed to the nth degree ;
The rose-clad pub and maid, say we,
Were but a wild surmise, sir.

The English beer is strong in cheer,
It joys to make the feet act queer,
And in the morn Jack sheds a tear,
His clothes are such an eyesore.

Old England's jam has made no hit ;
In fact, 'tis but a counterfeit ;
The turnips in it are but fit
For bombing Bill the Kaiser.

At home, we often sat and dreamed
Of England's shady lanes, where beamed
The moon, and happy lovers seemed
In rosy bow'rs to sigh, sir.

We've found the lanes, too true, too true ;
The shade is there, the mud is too ;
Nor roses bloom, nor lovers woo,
To please the passer-by, sir.

Alas! 'Tis but a dismal plain
Or rather, sea of mud and rain,
Where language that is all profane
Shoots hot as any geysir.

The King's review!—but what's the use?
He tried to see us through the juice;
If only he would cut us loose,
 We'd soon review the Kaiser.

If this is war, then roll on peace,
Give us the chicks, the pigs, the geese,
The dear old farm, sans mud, sans grease,
 You see, we're growing wiser.

Within an old cathedral dim,
We thought we'd sing an old world hymn,
Where ages long, folks worshipped Him,
 Their fathers' God on high, sir.

Our church is no cathedral rare,
We find it in God's open air;
And in the mud and rain we dare
 Ask Him for strength to die, sir.

So with the mud we'll take our chance,
And hope for better luck in France,
And save our grouch, some day perchance,
 We'll slip it to the Kaiser.

Salisbury Plains, November, 1914.

JOHNNIE CANUCKS

Johnnie Canucks, our time has come;
Enough we've had of fife and drum;
Stern is the work where bullets hum,
That leads to victory.

Johnnie Canucks, we're here in France,
(Gun and bayonet and shining lance),
Marching on to the Devil's dance,
On Belgium's blood-soaked lea.

Johnnie Canucks, right from the start
We've tried our best to play our part;
Now, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart,
Till Belgium shall be free

Johnnie Canucks, our country's fair;
May thought of her be as a prayer
To help us do our duty there,
Oh, Canada, for thee.

Firmly facing death we'll stand,
Doing our bit for the Motherland;
Oh, God, the issue is in Thy hand;
We place our trust in Thee

St. Nazarre, France, February, 1915.

5. TO THE CANADIANS WHO FELL AT YPRES.

Mourn for your dead, O Canada,
Yet not as the hopeless weep;
In a noble cause, for a country's love,
They passed to their quiet sleep.

Pray for your dead, O Canada,
Yet not as the hopeless pray,
For theirs was a death for a living hope;
They died for the coming day.

Remember your dead, O Canada,
Yet not as the hopeless mind,
For the God above saw how they died,
And the ways of His judgment are kind.

Think on the words, O Canada,
Christ died Himself to send;
No man hath greater love than this,
That he giveth his life for his friend.

Ypres, April 26th, 1915.

THE DAY OF ROMANCE.

Oh, many there be who came with me
On a venture far from home,
We crossed the sea in merry glee,
Glad of the chance to roam.

We thought of war as it was of yore,
Of charges and red high lights,
Of the battle's roar, with the flag before,
And the chance of a thousand fights.

We knew we came, in our country's name,
To fight our country's cause,
In a glorious game to win our fame
And our homeland's wild applause.

But now, alas, it comes to pass,
We fight not with ringing steel,
And the colours bright fade out of sight
In the mud of the battle field.

In helmets for gas, with their isinglass,
We parade at the dawn of day,
With a curse of hate for our respirator
We march to the field of fray.

A curse on the Hun, who has spoiled the fun,
May he perish with all he has;
In the depths of hell may he always dwell
And strangle forever in gas.

We fight like the mole, in the gloom and the cold,
Our battles are underground;
Romance's day has passed away,
With the cheery bugle's sound.

Farewell Romance, with the shining lance,
The flag and the pennants flying,
When a day of life in the glorious strife
Repaid the trouble of dying.

Be we should worry, or seek to hurry
To join those warriors bold;
In a thousand years they'll repeat with tears
That we were the heroes of old.

A SOLDIER'S PRAYER.

Oh! God of Peace, Thou Who has made
The earth in beauty, wonderful and calm,
With tow'ring mountains, pointing to the sky,
Serene and beautiful, protecting all
The valleys nestling 'neath their sheltering care,
Where little rills rush joyfully to join
Their waters in the calm majestic river;
With shady woods, where helpless things may hide
In happiness, from every foe secure;
With rolling prairies, bright with wondrous flowers,
The granary of ages yet unborn;
The heavens filled with starry lights,
Mysterious and full of peace,
A rest for man's tired eyes,
A hope and inspiration for his soul.

Why hast Thou then, in all Thy works,
Taught man the tranquil joys of peace,
And yet, with that same teaching, him inspired
With love so fierce, of country and of home
That, rise a breath of danger threat'ning them,
And he becomes a madman, wild with rage,
Bloodthirsty, fearing naught in life or death,
Throwing himself upon the threat'ning foe
With utter disregard of Death's dread shape,
As other times would hold him helpless and o'erawed?

And still, oh God, he feels in heart and soul
And every fibre of his throbbing being,
A surety that Thou approvest what he does,
And that Thy Son, the Prince of Peace, looks down
And contemplates his death with loving eye,
So that he fights in fairness for his home.

Oh God of Peace and Love, Who gave
An only Son, that we might learn to love,
Didst Thou not also give this instinct, old as life,
That tells us we must keep inviolate our land,
And live our lives in our own way beneath Thy guiding
hand,

And firmly hold the freedom, made sacred by the blood
Of countless generations gone before?

Oh, God of Peace, and God of Nature, we
Look on Thy works, and scan in helpless maze
Thy Book, in this, affliction's hour.
Have we then blindly through the ages wrought
Another Tower of Babel, while thinking that we built
A temple unto Thee, and that the time was near
When peace and brotherhood would span the world?

Thou art our only hope, and even now,
While striking for our lives and all we love,
We lift our faltering prayer, and ask that Thou
Would'st touch the heart of man, and rend the veil
Of ignorance, that hides Thy face from him.

God of Mercy, God of Love,
Hear us as we humbly cry,
Comfort those we leave behind us,
Closely hold us, who must die.

God of Battles, give us courage,
Truth and justice to maintain,
May our sacrifice be holy,
May it not be made in vain.

Cuinchy, June, 1915.

8.

A VALENTINE, 1916.

There's a song, little sweetheart, a song I love well,
It rings in my heart like a sweet silver bell,
Its burden I need only three words to tell,
I love you.

There's a song, little sweetheart, I hear in the wind,
And, search through the world, I never could find
A song that sounds sweeter or more to my mind
Than, I love you.

There's a song that the burn sings to you and to me,
Tho' many have heard it, I guess only we
Know that it sings on its way to the sea,
How I love you.

All nature is singing the song everywhere,
The flowers in the field, the birds in the air;
O Lassie, the song has a throb like a prayer,
I love you.

Oh, the burn in the dell and the flowers of the spring,
The breeze as it blows and the bird on the wing
Are all my good friends, and to you they will sing,
How I love you.

Altho' I am far, far away from your side,
And between us there flows war's terrible tide,
I know they will tell you, what'er may betide,
I love you.

Romarin, February, 1916.

A SOLDIER'S DREAM.

When the last tin of M and V rations
Has joined all its friends gone before,
And McCopachie's name but reminds us
Of the terrible horrors of war;

When we've ditched the last tin of bully,
Made way with old Tickler's jam,
And cursed the last box of hard tack
With a hearty unanimous damn,

We shall feed, O ye gods we shall need to,
Just eat for an aeon or two,
And when they all think we have finished
We will start in and eat anew.

And those that were starved shall be happy,
They shall sit in a big morris chair,
They shall drink long drinks out of glasses,
Of vintages old and rare.

They shall find real eats to feed on,
Chicken and turkey and goose,
Till the whole of the feathered creation
Will think that all Hell is turned loose.

They shall never grow weary of feeding,
But shall eat on and drink without end,
Until at the last they grow sleepy,
When they'll sleep, then start feeding again.

And no one shall kick at the cooking
Of mother or sister or wife,
But each shall be pleasant and happy,
While wielding his fork and his knife.

And no one shall talk about warfare
Or the troubles of days gone by,
But of sleeping and drinking and eating,
Of real decent beds and of Pie.

A MEMORY OF EDINBURGH.

(On Returning from New Year's Leave in Scotland).

Dear Auld Reekie, dear Auld Reekie,
 On your hills sae fair an' grand,
 Hoo my heart to ye is turnin'
 Frae this wae and distant land.

Hoo I'm yearnin' for a sicht o' ye,
 Sae grey an' misty dim,
 Wi' your castle pilin' skyward,
 On its rock sae dour an' grim.

Wi' your churches an' your palaces,
 An' beer shops side by side,
 An' your bric-a-brac on Calton Hill
 To mind ye o' your pride.

Wi' your guid folk gaein' douce to kirk,
 Speakin' aye in solemn tone,
 An' your whisky voices chauntin',
 New Year's nicht aroon the Tron.

Lyin' in a trench in Flanders,
 Come ye aften to my min',
 An' I dream I'm wi' my dearie,
 As in days o' auld lang syne.

Hand in hand we sit thegither,
 On my cheek I feel her breath,
 Till I wauken wi' a shiver,
 To resume my trade in death.

Dear Auld Reekie, guard her tender,
 For she's a' the warld to me;
 Keep her safe to bid me welcome
 When I'm hame frae ower the sea.

(A free translation of verses found on the body
of an unknown German soldier).

Sing of the glory of battle,
Praise ye the pride of war,
The blood of the millions fallen,
The ruin of millions more.

Sing of the courage our heroes
Show on each stricken field.
In the glory of king and country
Death reapeth a bountiful yield.

Sing of the honours they pay them
For the chances they took with a smile;
Are the medals and crosses of iron
Really the things worth while?

Many rewards hath the battle
For the man who fights as he should,
But death knoweth no distinction
When awarding the cross of wood.

Hero or coward, he gains it
Who giveth his life in the fight.
Ah! See in the fields of Flanders
How they paint the greensward white.

Can a man have heart in the fighting
When his children are starving behind?
Surely we're reaping the whirlwind,
We who have sown the wind.

Babes of the mothers of Belgium,
Slain in our drunken pride,
Babes of the Lusitania,
Sobbing beneath the tide.

What have we done, Almighty?
What are we going to do?
Have we thought we dealt with an earth power,
To find we must deal with You?

Perchance that our cause is righteous,
For the life of our race we fight;
But our foes still thicken around us,
Give light, oh God, give light.

Darkness behind and before us,
Sorrow enfolding our land;
Lord, in Thy mercy, send us
A sign we can understand.

Ypres Salient, May, 1916.

12. A SONG OF THE FIRST CONTINGENT.

Canada, Canada, sing we to thee,
Lads on the battle line, far o'er the sea,
Song of a love that grows with the years,
Love that dispels all our terrors and fears,
Love that has brightened the path we have trod,
Love that is sacred as love for our God,
Love that is life to thy sons on the field,
Helping them conquer, never to yield;
Love of the land of the dear Maple Tree,
This is the song we are singing to thee.

Deep in our hearts thine answering song
Strengthens and heartens us all the day long;
Winds of the sea to us softly bring
Wonderful songs that thy great rivers sing.
From mountain to sea, they sing as they roll,
Each sweeping turning new beauties unfold;
Beautiful rivers, so pure and so free,
Memory's echo, dear country, of thee.

Stern are thy mountains, mighty and grand,
Singing the strength of our own native land,
Strength that thou gavest to us with our breath,
Strength that has held us strong, even to death.
Song of the prairie, songs of the hills,
Song of the forest, songs of the rill,
Song of the farm, of the mill, of the mine,
Song of the breeze, blowing soft through the pine,
Song of the bird as it sings in the tree,
Sweetly the wind wafts them over the sea.

Hear we another song, far, far the best,
Fail ne'er to bring it, dear wind of the west,
Song of the hearts that are loving us yet,
Hearts that are bleeding, that never forgot,
Hearts that are aching for lover or son,
For the dear one whose fighting forever is done;
Hearts that encircle us still with their love,
Love that is pure as the angels' above,
Tender as pure, yet wondrously strong,
To guide us aright, to hold us from wrong.

Hearken our country, again to our song,
Song of thy sons, the free and the strong,
Song of all songs, as old as the earth,
The love of a man for the land of his birth.
Freely we've bleed, that thy freedom might live,
Gladly we'll bleed while we've still blood to give,
All that thou gavest us, our gift shall be,
Canada, Canada, all, all for thee.

Petit Pont, Belgium, January, 1916.

13.

"13."

I'm writing with my fingers crossed,
I've a black cat on my knee,
A horseshoe hangs on the dugout door,
And I'm touching wood, you see.

But even at that the rhythm is lost,
And the rhyme is terribly free;
I don't think I'll try to do any more,
Or "13" will do for me.

Ouderdom, Belgium, May, 1916.

Were you ever up against it, with your belt's last hole
drawn in,
And the shrapnel and the splinters flying round like
merry sin,
And you couldn't hear your rifle for the high explosive's
din,
And you knew that things could get no worse, and then
you had to grin?

Were you ever up against it, in a shell hole for a while,
With the Willies searching for you with all their beastly
guile,
And your tongue swelled up for water, and the water half
a mile,
And you knew it was the limit, and then you had to smile?

Were you ever up against it, when the chuck was cut in
half,
And the lice were thick upon you, like a blinking general's
staff,
And the Allemands had shelled the rum before you'd had a
quaff,
Then you knew the worst was over, and you had to have
a laugh?

But if suppose you hadn't grinned, but just sat down to
cry,
And by shifting your position got a nice one in the eye,
Not "a cushy," or "a blighty," but a one that made you
die,
Don't you think the smile, or grin, or laugh, were better
than the sigh?

Mann Farm, Zillebeke, June, 1916.

15. "IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE MANY
MANSIONS."

Let not your heart be troubled,
Lift up your eyes to the hills,
Through the sorrows and blood of the nations
Christ healeth the world of its ills.

Let not your heart be troubled,
For those who fall in the strife,
For Christ Himself hath spoken,
"I am the Truth and the Life."

Let not your heart be troubled,
They follow the path that He trod,
And Christ for them hath preparèd
A place in the House of God.

Let not your heart be troubled,
Trust in His tender care,
Fear not the terrors of battle,
Jesus Himself is there.

Comforting, loving and tending
Those who may fall in the fray;
"Peace, My peace, I give you,
Come to Me, I am the Way."

Ypres Salient, June, 1916.

(Dedicated to those who are making fortunes out of war contracts and to a dear old lady of eighty years, who sent us a parcel of much needed socks).

I hate to think, in Canada, that grafters ply their trade,
That out of blood and suffering great fortunes can be
made,
That we, who for the honour fight, should have to share
the stain
Of those who smirch her honour with filthy love of gain.

I love to think, in Canada, a dear old lady sits
And weaves a prayer in every pair of soldier's socks she
knits,
For we, out here in Flanders, know her thoughts and ours
are one,
That each is glad to bear a share of work that must be
done.

O, dear old lady, knitting, we fight the same good fight,
Our youth we give our country, you give the widow's
mite,
And God, who seeth all things, and judgeth from the
heart,
Will place the loving knitter and the Judas far apart.

Ypres Salient, July 4th, 1916.

So young, you say, to die, yet of his best
Each gave, and fully earned his right to rest.
Their souls return to God, war worn but clean
And holy in His sight, in honour dressed.

What matter if they've missed a day or two
Of life on this torn earth? Why should we rue
That early they have passed to their reward
Beyond those portals that we all must through?

Each man has his allotted part to play,
In God's great plan, to toil his troubled day.
His life is perfect when his share is done,
He might but mar his work if he should stay.

So some we loved, the bravest of the brave,
Who life and fortune for their country gave,
Sleep here in peace, their sacrifice complete,
To rise triumphant over death and grave.

Their lips are locked, think you that they repine,
Beyond death's door, their sacrifice divine,
Or that, were life anew to call them forth
And freedom called again, they would decline?

As fire the metal proves, or pure or base,
So war in men proves honour or disgrace,
And they at God's high altar now can stand,
Nor tremble when they see Him face to face.

Ypres Salient, August 5th, 1916.

Only a bunch of slackers,
But their hearts are with us we know,
And they longed to fight for their country
But they hadn't the guts to go.

Only a bunch of slackers,
But they're doing the best they can,
For you can't expect in a piker
To find the heart of a man.

Only a bunch of slackers,
Like men in their outward shape,
But a monkey clad in breeches
Retains the heart of an ape.

Only a bunch of slackers,
Do you mind at the start of the war
How they waved their flags for old England
And called for three cheers more?

Only a bunch of slackers,
But they were not slackers then,
For they shouted like thirsty heroes
Till their country called for men.

Only a bunch of slackers,
But their hearts thrill to the drum,
And they'd love to fight for their country,
But they haven't the guts to come.

Poizieres, October 15th, 1916.

O Tommie, gentle Tommie, did you hear the dugout creak?
And down the wall a rivulet has started from a leak,
And you'll have to dam the wave.
If the roof comes down upon you, then the Lord have
mercy on you,
And we'll plant a little daisy on your grave;
But your troubles will be over
When you sleep beneath the clover,
And we'll mention on your cross that you died brave.

O Tommie, gentle Tommie, do you hear the Johnsons
growl,
And Silent Sue a-pinging and the Little Willies howl
In the splashing of the rain?
'Tis a night to make you shiver and the trench is just a
river,
And the parapet is caving in again.
It ain't hard to keep awake
When your bed is just a lake
And a sleep may last forever and forever.

O Tommie, gentle Tommie, with your face a muddy stain,
Look over Heinies line where the lights begin to shine,
A-calling in the rain;
A-calling in the rain, my boys, a-calling in the rain,
Where Fritz and Hans are starting up their funny tricks
again.
So you'll have to go and fight
In the muddy, oozy night,
For our S.O.S. has never flared in vain.

O Tommie, gentle Tommie, you have done it all before,
Since trenches were invented, since the starting of the
war,
You have always damned the rain.
But your hearts and hands are stout and you'll see the
damn thing out,

Tho' your stomach's but a vacuum in pain;
And we'll spread the oft told story,
How you died for king and glory,
At the calling of the beacon in the rain.

Courcellette, November 7th, 1916.

20. JUST A SPASM.

Who wouldn't be in England in the lovely month of June,
In Blighty with the roses and a pretty girl to spoon?
In, June, July or August, or all the year around,
For in England, dear old England, one is safe above the
ground.

We'd love to be in England in the lovely month of June,
In June, July or August or any time that's soon,
But what's the use of wishing when in Flanders we must
dwell

Until we're sure the Kaiser has landed safe in Hell.

So tell the girls we loved at home we're thinking of them
yet,

Nor Flemish maid, nor battle's roar, can make us once
forget

The girls of dear old Blighty, where beauty had its birth,
Next to Canadian maidens are the sweetest on the earth.

Ypres Salient, July, 1916.

21. THE GIFT.

I was a poor man, yet I gave
From out my slender treasure store,
A gift that marks as paltry all
That kings or millionaires might give.
Their money, castles, thrones and precious stones
Are dross beside my gift.

For who, among them all, would part with life,
If he might save it with his gold?

Yet I, a poor man, gave it gladly.

Thelus, April, 1917.

22. THE WORLD, THE KAISER AND THE DEVIL.

Kaiser, thou hast willed it, 'twas at thy command
Ruin, rape and carnage tore a pleasant land,
Blood has flown like water; for thy whim and pride
Fire and sword and famine travel side by side;
For your martial glory Belgium's babes were killed,
Mothers died beside them, Kaiser, as you willed.

Kaiser, were you human, three long years ago,
When you turned your country to a world of woe?
Didn't then the devil lead you to a peak,
Show you world dominion, bid you but to speak,
Barter soul for glory, play with loaded dice?
Then you staked your honour, now you pay the price.

Satan was your leader, and he led you well,
But the road he led you was the road to hell.
Kaiser, you can trace it, blood marks every trail,
Ruined homes and churches, harried hill and dale,
Cities turned to shambles, love turned into hate,
Now you ask for peace terms, halting at the gate.

Kaiser, see your leader, Satan beckons on,
But you fear to follow where your men have gone,
Fiends, yes, incarnate, but 'twas your command
Sent them into Belgium with the sword and brand,
Lustful, drunken, cruel, still they gave their lives,
While you cringed in safety with their widowed wives.

Kaiser, now you know it, war is easy made,
A madman in his palace can start the awful trade;
A proud and powerful nation, secure within its might,
Can tear a scrap of paper and swear that might is right;
But peace is God's own gift to man, the world is in His
care,
And He will never pass with scorn the little people's
prayer.

Peace isn't for your asking, you made your choice before,
You sold your soul to Satan, you gave the word for war;
The world you tried to shatter has got you in its grip,
Down, tyrant, to your knees, and drink, the cup is at your
lip,
The dregs of bitterness are there, and think the while
you quaff
That down in hell your master and his little devils laugh.

Bully-Grenay, February, 1917.

23. SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 22, 1917.

In this quiet little trench
Full of flies and every stench,
Fritzies aeroplanes on high
Seem to rule the whole damn sky,
While the whiz-bang's gentle song
Fills our ears the whole day long,
And the heavies' steady roar
Tells us there is still a war.
So the happy moments slip,
Watching from our F. O. Pip.

Bully biscuits, water drear,
What price for a pint of beer?
Dream of chicken, roast of beef,
Give your belt another reef.
Thoughts of home and all it means
Spoil our taste for pork and beans.
On a Sunday afternoon,
All the world seems out of tune,
Day of rest and hour of prayer
Forgotten out in France somewhere.

F.O.P. in front of Acheville.

24. SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JULY — ?

In a garden back at home
Where a saint might love to roam,
Song of bird and hum of bee,
Scent of roses drifting free,
Shaved and clean and free from lice,
Something in a glass with ice,
Memory of a glorious dinner
Lingering with the happy sinner,
Just to lie upon the grass
Watching lazy cloudlets pass,
Butterflies in sunshine play,
Sunday is a joyous day;
Dream in all its beauty ripe,
Alas! 'tis only of the pipe.

F. O. P. Acheville.

25. A CANADIAN'S GRAVE.

(In Memory of C. C. C.)

We buried him 'neath the shattered sod,
Nor sound of bugle or firing squad,
His soul we left in the hands of God,
But we turned his face to the west.

He feared not death and he feared no foe,
His spirit, free as the winds that blow,
Gone to his rest, as he wished to go,
A soldier doing his best.

We buried him where he fought and died,
Under God's canopy free and wide,
Far from his home and his countryside,
A hero taking his rest.

Maroc, January, 1917.

26. THE FIRST CONTINGENT IN ACTION.

Oh, we're the First Contingent, boys,
To leave our native shore,
We've pot-lucked with the devil some
Since first we came to war.

Altho' we never signed the pledge,
We never tasted booze,
But drank our tot of ginger pop
A-cursing old samyooze.

We've been in every rotten plight
An army yet was found,
From camping on the ocean blue
To living under ground.

We fought the lice, the dirt, the mud,
On plains where all was juicy,
The only music we e'er heard
Was C. sub, cursing "Lucy."

We always tended church parade,
Except when voluntary;
Said "Thank you" for our mulligan
And jam extraordinary.

But when we struck old London town
Our joy was wild and free,
We germanized the poor old burg
And put it on the Spree.

We said good-bye to England's shore,
What ho, for Sunny France!
Were we down hearted when we left?
No chance, old man, no chance.

We showed the world what we could do
At Ypres, when all seemed lost,
We held the line, we saved the day,
But, God, at what a cost!

And then again at Festubert,
Fritz minds the place full well;
'Twas there we gave the Allemands
A little taste of hell.

In the mud and blood of Plugstreet,
Where the summer passed away,
And the cold and rain of winter
Turned the country dull and gray.

We made monkies of the Bosches,
Bombing sprees 'mid falling flares,
Giving Fritz the dope he needed
To forget his earthly cares.

And then we had a little rest
At good old Bollezeele,
Where we practised standing gun drill,
And the booze was almost real.

Now St. Eloi may have been good,
And kind, and true, and brave;
But from the village of his name,
All good Canadians save.

Its street of hell has evil fame,
'Tis known in song and story;
Our rations there were cut in half,
But not the mud or glory.

Old Fritzie tried both night and day
To gain an inch or two,
And while we took some nasty jars,
We handed him a few.

The craters, where we first went in,
Were full of smoke and flame;
But after we'd been there a while
Old Fritz again was tame.

And then we moved to Sixty Hill,
We started mining here;
"How long, O Lord," the sappers cried,
With many a bitter tear.

While miners stayed behind to delve
We played the Arab trick,
And faded silently away
To show at Zillebeke.

'Twas hell on earth, Fritz drove us back
A bloody mile or so;
His weight of guns and shells were such
We simply had to go.

We waited for a week or two,
Our wind just to regain,
Then o'er the top, one stormy night,
And Fritz went back again.

Our four months in the salient
Had cost us mighty dear,
But Fritz admits, at Mouquet Farm,
We filled his soul with fear.

We pushed him back, he fought like hell,
He might have saved the trouble;
From Courcelette to Grandecourt
We sent him at the double.

But rain and mud, and snow and slush,
To Heinie showed their favour,
And held us deep within their grip,
Despite our best endeavour.

To celebrate the Christmas month,
Near Arras, Roclincourt,
We copped the record in a raid,
Our captures just six score.

And then we had our New Year's rest,
Inspections back at Brouay,
And on a peaceful sector, just
In front of Bully Grenay.

'Twas raid and raid, and raid again,
A-pestering the Hun;
At times we had to fight like hell,
At times 'twas only fun.

But fun or fight 'twas all the same,
We played, he had to dance;
The Maple Leaf's the tune for Fritz
To crab-step out of France.

He heard the same old melody
At Vimy and Arleux,
At Farbus and at Willarval,
Fresnoy and Thelus, too.

And every time he hears the song,
The square-head heaves a sigh,
And, shouting "Kamarad," makes haste
To raise his hands on high,

We've done the bloody circuit of
The whole damn British line;
But three years finds us waiting for
"The Watch Upon the Rhine."

Three years! there's still a few of us,
Oldtimers of the First,
To cheer the rookie when he buys
A beer to quench our thirst.

And we repay his tender care
With stories of the war,
And talk and talk until the rook
Has spent his rookish store.

But soon the same old Rookie boy
Has his own tales to tell,
And bye and bye we find he has
Absorbed our tales as well.

And so the good old story lives,
Of how we've fought and died,
And how we always took on time,
The point for which we tried.

We've left a big, wide trail behind;
We're blazing it ahead;
A trail where glory lights the way,
A long, long trail of red.

Our comrades graves dot foreign soil,
From Albert to the sea;
They died like men, and while men live
Shall ne'er forgotten be.

We're still the First Contingent, lads,
To leave our native land;
Come rough or smooth, we still can say
We've always played our hand.

Vimy, July 3rd, 1917.

27. WHEN HEROES DIE.

When heroes die our eyes are dim,
The last post sounds our sorrow;
We chaunt a drear funereal hymn
And face with dread the morrow.

For them, death held no coward fears,
Life held no time for sighing;
Why should we dim with bitter tears
The splendour of their dying?

A silver river, bright and wide,
To meet the dawn is flowing;
Their souls embarked upon its tide,
Nor trembled at their going.

When heroes die, let trumpets play
The morning's bright Reveille,
For God has cleared the mists away,
His light shines o'er the valley.

Shornecliffe, August 17th, 1917.

29. CRIANLARICH.

At Crianlarich by Ben More,
The hills are soft in summer haze,
The shadow clouds drift o'er the braes,
And peace is here of other days,
Nor sounds the tumult of the war,
At Crianlarich by Ben More.

At Crianlarich by Ben More,
In days that long have passed us by,
The fiery cross was waved on high
And Highland clans, rushed forth to die;
The claymores flashed and hearts were sore,
At Crianlarich by Ben More.

At Crianlarich by Ben More,
Where God's peace rests on strath and glen,
The old-time spirit lives again;
The King has called his highland men,
And women's hearts again are sore
At Crianlarich by Ben More.

At Crianlarich by Ben More,
The sun is shining through the rain,
And out in France a soldier's pain
Is lessened as he dreams again;
For Heaven seems but little more
Than Crianlarich by Ben More.

August 6th, 1917.

30.

L'ENVOIE.

Good-bye, little verses, away you go,
Over the seas to a land I know,
And you'll tell the folks that you find there
We are thinking of them, in France, somewhere.
But first you must go to London town,
Then take the first train north,
With never a rest until you stop
At the edge of the Firth of Forth.
And in Auld Reekie's mist and rain
You must seek and you must find,
And give my love to the dearest girl,
The girl that I left behind.
And then you'll on to the dearest land,
Over the ocean blue,
Where the folks will know and understand
The message I send with you
Away, little verses, adieu, adieu,
Each night, in my dreams, I'll follow you.

