

In the Battle Silences

Poems written at the Front

BY

FREDERICK GEORGE SCOTT

1ST CANADIAN DIVISION, B.E.F.



TORONTO

THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY LIMITED

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vi

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TO THE MEMORY OF OUR COMRADES
FROM GREAT BRITAIN, THE OVERSEAS DOMINIONS,
AND INDIA, WHO IN THE GREAT WAR HAVE EQUALLY
GLORIOUSLY AND EQUALLY WILLINGLY LAID
DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR THE CAUSE OF
HONOUR AND CIVILIZATION AND
HUMAN LIBERTY

Not by the power of Commerce, Art, or Pen,
Shall our great Empire stand, nor has it stood,
But by the noble deeds of noble men,
Heroes' lives and heroes' outpoured blood.

AVE ATQUE VALE!

THEY saw in wider vision
The Empire and its need,
And came, with swift decision,
To do the utmost deed.

And now, and ever after,
Their fame will grow with years;
They came with songs and laughter
We leave them here with tears.

“On the Rue du Bois” and “Requiescant” are printed
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THE CROWN OF EMPIRE



THE CROWN OF EMPIRE



ENGLAND of our Fathers and
England of our Sons,
Along the dark horizon line the day-
dawn glory runs,

For Empire has been ours of old and Empire ours
shall be—

His grip is on the world to-day whose grip is on
the sea.

O England of our Fathers and England of our
Sons,

Above the roar of battling hosts, the thunder of the
guns,

A Mother's voice was calling us, we heard it over-
sea,

The Blood which Thou didst give us is the blood
we spill for Thee.

THE CROWN OF EMPIRE

O England of our Fathers and England of our
Sons,

Along the dark horizon line the day-dawn glory
runs,

For golden Peace is drawing near, her paths are on
the sea,—

He grips the hearts of all mankind who stands for
Liberty.





ON THE RUE DU BOIS



ON THE RUE DU BOIS



PALLID Christ within this broken
shrine,

Not those torn Hands and not that
Heart of Thine

Have given the nations blood to drink like wine.

Through weary years and 'neath the changing skies,
Men turned their back on those appealing Eyes
And scorned as vain Thine awful Sacrifice.

Kings with their armies, children in their play,
Have passed unheeding down this shell-ploughed
way,
The great world knew not where its true strength
lay.

In pomp and luxury, in lust of gold,
In selfish ease, in pleasures manifold,
"Evil is good, good evil," we were told.

ON THE RUE DU BOIS

Yet here, where nightly the great flare-lights gleam,
And murder stalks triumphant in their beam,
The world has wakened from its empty dream.

At last, O Christ, in this strange, darkened land,
Where ruined homes lie round on every hand,
Life's deeper truths men come to understand.

For lonely graves along the country side,
Where sleep those brave hearts who for others died
Tell of life's union with the Crucified.

And new light kindles in the mourner's eyes,
Like day-dawn breaking through the rifted skies,
For Life is born of life's self-sacrifice.

SAILLY, FRANCE.

1915.





A CANADIAN



A CANADIAN



HE glad and brave young heart
Had come across the sea,
He longed to play his part
In crushing tyranny.

The mountains and the plains
Of his beloved land
Were wine within his veins
And gave an iron hand.

He scorned the thought of fear,
He murmured not at pain,
The call of God was clear,
The path of duty plain.

Beneath the shower of lead
Of poison and of fire,
He charged and fought and bled
Ablaze with one desire.

A CANADIAN

O Canada, with pride
Look up and greet the morn,
Since of thy wounded side
Such breed of men is born.

VLAMERTINGHE, NEAR YPRES

27 April 1915





A GRAVE IN FLANLERS



A GRAVE IN FLANDERS



ALL night the tall trees over-head
Are whispering to the stars;
Their roots are wrapped about the dead
And hide the hideous scars.

The tide of war goes rolling by,
The legions sweep along;
And daily in the summer sky
The birds will sing their song.

No place is this for human tears,
The time for tears is done;
Transfigured in these awful years,
The two worlds blend in one.

This boy had visions while in life
Of stars on distant skies;
So death came in the midst of strife
A sudden, glad surprise.

A GRAVE IN FLANDERS

He found the songs for which he yearned,
Hopes that had mocked desire;
His heart is resting now which burned
With such consuming fire.

So down the ringing road we pass,
And leave him where he fell,
The guardian trees, the waving grass,
The birds will love him well.





YULETIDE IN FRANCE



YULETIDE IN FRANCE



LITTLE sprig of rosemary, I pluck
you in the garden,
In this little Gallic garden, on this
misty winter's day.

I can hear the old rooks calling,
And the distant shells are falling,
But this little sprig of rosemary has borne my heart
away.

O little sprig of rosemary, you bear me through the
ages
To the olden golden Yuletides that our fathers
knew of yore,
When the midnight Mass bell ringing,
Set the carol singers singing,
And sweet rosemary was scattered on the shining
chancel floor.

YULETIDE IN FRANCE

O little sprig of rosemary, I hear the song and
laughter

When the boar's head was carried in, adown the
armoured hall,

And the rosemary and bay

Were as sweet as new-mown hay,

While the merriment of Yuletide was uniting great
and small.

O little sprig of rosemary, I pluck you in the
garden,

And my heart is sore and heavy with the cares we
have to-day,

For the Christ has been among us,

And the Angel Hosts have sung us

All the happy songs of Heaven, but they sounded
far away.

O little sprig of rosemary, as I pluck you in the
garden,

In this little Gallic garden where the brave are laid
to rest,

YULETIDE IN FRANCE

An English mother weeping
A sad, sad Yule is keeping,
Remembering one who once was the Christ-Child
on her breast.

O little sprig of rosemary, I thank you for the
dreaming,
In this hallowed Gallic garden, on this misty
winter's day;
Your mission is to leaven
This poor earth with thoughts of Heaven,
When, for those brave hearts that slumber here, we
fold our hands and pray.





KNIGHTHOOD

TO H. T. O.



KNIGHTHOOD

TO H. T. O.



In honour, chivalrous;
In duty, valorous;
In all things, noble;
To the heart's core, clean.





MONTENEGRO



MONTENEGRO



WHO hath betrayed thee, England? Who
hath tied
Thy mighty hands and lulled thy
heart to sleep?

Dost thou not hear, borne through the starless
deep,
From shores inviolate and mountain side,
The death-cry of a race which had defied
The invader's foot for centuries and did keep,
In lonely vales and on the cragged steep,
Her trust with freedom in immortal pride?

O England, rouse thee from this sleep of death.
Now is the day of doom, the fateful hour.
Faint not and falter not, England, my Queen.
Close at thine ear, the sleepless ocean saith:
"Not for thyself God gave me as thy dower;
Thy trust is world-wide, and hath ever been."



O CANADA



O CANADA



CANADA, my country, and my love!

O Canada, with cloudless skies above!

Where'er I roam, where'er my home,

My heart goes back to thee,--

Thy lakes and streams, Thy boundless dreams,

Thy rivers running free.

O Canada, O Canada!

God pour his blessings on thee from above,

O Canada, my country and my love!





REQUIESCANT



REQUIESCANT



N lonely watches night by night
Great visions burst upon my sight,
For down the stretches of the sky
The hosts of dead go marching by.

Strange ghostly banners o'er them float,
Strange bugles sound an awful note,
And all their faces and their eyes
Are lit with starlight from the skies.

The anguish and the pain have passed
And peace hath come to them at last,
But in the stern looks linger still
The iron purpose and the will.

Dear Christ, who reign'st above the flood
Of human tears and human blood,
A weary road these men have trod,
O house them in the home of God.

IN A FIELD NEAR YPRES.

April 1915



BLOOD-GUILT



BLOOD-GUILT



HE brand of Cain is on your brow,

Emperor!

A crown of gold may hide it now,

Emperor!

But when the day of reckoning comes,
When flags are furled and hushed the drums,
When labour goes with bruised hands
To plough once more the blood-stained lands,
A people's wrath will rend the skies
And topple down your dynasties,
Emperor!

In vain you call upon the Lord,

Emperor!

You boast of honour and the sword,

Emperor!

What god will bless the hideous flood
Which drowns the world in human blood?

BLOOD-GUILT

The vengeance of a broken trust
Will grind your empire in the dust,
Till Hohenzollern crowns are cast
Upon the refuse of the past,
Emperor!

The cries of multitudes unfed,
Emperor!

The curses of the millions dead,
Emperor!

Will these not heap on you the scorn
Of generations yet unborn?
Are there no murmurs in your ear
Of retribution drawing near?—
The fingers of a hand that write
Inscribe your doom upon the night,
Emperor!

BEAUPRE, NEAR QUEBEC.

20 August 1914.

TO FRANCE



WHAT is the gift we have given thee,
Sister?

What is the trust we have laid in
thy hand?—

Hearts of our bravest our best and our dearest,
Blood of our blood we have sown in thy land.

What for all time will the harvest be, Sister?

What will spring up from the seed that is sown?
Freedom and peace and good will among Nations,
Love that will bind us with love all our own.

Bright is the path that is opening before us,

Upward and onward it mounts through the night:
Sword shall not sever the bonds that unite us
Leading the world to the fullness of light.

Sorrow hath made thee more beautiful, Sister,

Nobler and purer than ever before;
We who are chastened by sorrow and anguish
Hail thee as sister and queen evermore.



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