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ALABAMA JIM

AND OTHER

LIGHTS *and* SHADOWS



By GEORGE W. SEYMOUR

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and other
LIGHTS *and* SHADOWS

By GEORGE W. SEYMOUR



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PART I.

ALABAMA JIM.

*There was story brought home from the scene of World
War,
And related by one of the Hill-Billy clan;
As you may n'er have heard all about it before,
Here is how it was told and the way the facts ran:*

Some lad wuz Jim, I'll tell the world!
One day into our camp he whirled
Astride a balky, moth-pecked mare,
Thet wuz mos' ribs 'n' kinky hair;
A nag thet pulled a plough fur years
'N' n'er knew curry-comb nor shears.

Our Jim wuz true blue thu 'n' thu,
Tho he but measured *four feet two*,
Wuz short o' laigs 'n' shy o' girth,
N' hed no learnin' since his birth.
He looked like he n'er hed no sense,
'N' held his own sel' in suspense.

Jim came to jine Hill-Billy clan,
Like he wuz growed-up mountain man;
Fur nothin' much cared thet stray lamb
'Cept our ole State o' Alabam'—
Its rugged hills 'n' fertile plains,
'N' haltin' brooks 'n' 'possum lanes.

'Bout lonely mountains thet thar child
Wuz allus 'lowed to wander wild;
He wuz a shaver turned thirteen,
With face thet made him look as green
As taste o' some white-lightnin' brew
Thet never hed much chance to stew.

We knows thet this rough, rovin' lad
Got raised without a ma or dad,
'N' thet when World War measles came
'N' set all mother earth aflame,
He hiked off with a neighbor's hoss,
So's he might come to git across.

.

Straight down our reg'ment's cleanest street,
With Jim jes' han's 'n' shoeless feet,
Pas' sentry dashed the wheezin' nag
A-swingin' shot-gun, trav'lin' bag,
A snack o' hay, 'n' a canteen
Sich es no army ever seen.

"Whoa thar!" hull staff o' Cunnel cried.
"Thet you?" Jim mockingly replied;
'N' pulling up his four-hoofed Liz,
Dismounts 'n' says: "Waal, *here I is!*
"Back home 'tis said thar be a war
"On some high soundin' furren shore.

"I'm here to jine 'n' help you quell
"Them distant glowworms come fum Hell;
"My gun ain't much by way o' looks,
"But hit speaks el'quent es mos' books;
" 'N' tho my nag's mos' gone to seed
"She's thar when hit's a case o' speed."

The Cunnel laughs, says: "I've a hunch
"You 'n' your hoss ain't hed no lunch."
He orders thet they both be fed,
'N' after hes Jim 'n' nag led
Far 'yond the limits o' the camp,
'N' thar informed they'd hev to vamp.

'Cause Jim wuz only *four feet two*.
Tho game 'n' tough es me 'n' you,
The Cunnel guessed he wuz too small
To grace the board in our mess-hall,
'N' jes' a trifle under age
To git his name on hist'ry's page.

Jim journeyed back to his ole home,
Pretendin' never more he'd roam
To save the face o' Alabam',
By gittin' in a furren jam,
'Side 'ristocrat Hill-Billy clan,
'N' fightin' like growed mountain man.

.

When we wuz all got to Camp Mills,
Far fum ole Alabama's hills,
'N' bidin' time to sail away
With Rainbow outfit to the fray,
Who saunters up our regiment's street,
But Jim with bof his shoeless feet.

Jim he come all the way by freight,
'N' tho the hour wuz mos' too late,
He opened flap o' Cunnel's tent,
'N' without knockin' in he went,
A-bustin' all o' slumber's joys
With his uncanny backwoods noise.

"Waal, Boss," Jim hollers, "*here I is!*
"This time without my speedy Liz;
"I left the ole hoss on the farm,
"So's she would never come to harm.
"I'm up fum Alabam' to jine,
"'N' all I ax is countersign."

The Cunnel sets up in his berth,
Begins to cuss, says: "What on earth
"You doin' here; 'n' how'd you git
"Up Nor'? You needs 'n iron mitt
"'Plied to yo' fresh, confounded hide;
"Back home t'-morrow you will slide."

Next day thet lad Jim disappears,
'N' our ole Cunnel sheds some tears;
"Fur Jim," he says, "is jest the sort
"Made o' the stuff thet allus brought
"Peace 'n' good will 'mong Christian men
"Thet gits to scrappin' now 'n' then."

.

The morn we reaches lan' o' woe,
I'd hev all Alabama know,
I'd hev it preached in every clime,
I'd hev it sung in psalms 'n' rhyme:
The furst to raise loud cry 'n' hue
Wuz thet thar Jim just *four feet two*.

How Jim got over he n'er told;
'Twas said he shipped in mine craft's hold.
Furst thing we sees wuz his bare feet,
The next his han's thet n'er wuz neat,
'N' then his freckled, grinnin' fize.
He greets the clan with: "*Here I is!*"

"You here!" the Cunnel says surprised;
"I can't believe what lamps my eyes."
Says Jim: "Waal, I is safe across,
'N' I ain't yit got no remorse.
"This time when you suggests I dine,
"See thet I'm furst allowed to jine."

The Cunnel summons mate o' ship,
'N' says to Jim: "You needs a whip.
"Ain't I done tol' you 'rules is rules,'
"'N' war's no place fur babes 'n' fools?
"Your're goin' back to Alabam',
"You poor, misguided mountain lamb."

"I ain't no babe nor lamb nor fool,"
Says Jim, collected, ca'm 'n' cool;
"I've jes' es much right es the res'
"To take a han' in this here mess.
"You knows thet I kin tote a gun;
"Please, Cunnel, let me snipe *one* Hun!"

The Cunnel lifts Jim to his breast,
'N' thar afore the hull of Brest,
He plants some kisses on his cheeks
Thet ain't ben washed fur days 'n' weeks.
"It breaks my heart you cannot jine,
'N' be with me on frin' line.

"Yours is youth's spirit o' our lan',
"O' lads quick to learn, understan'
"Jes' what we all is fightin' for,
"Why Alabamans storm this shore
"With men fum So' 'n' all the Wes',
"Fum East 'n' Nor', U. S. A.'s bes'."

The Cunnel turned to transport's mate,
'N' then 'n' thar decreed Jim's fate:
"Give him the bes' thar be aboard,
"N' all the navy kin afford;
"Git him back safe to Alabam',
"He's sure a credit to Big Sam."

.

Fur months we sees no more o' Jim;
We pictures him back in the swim
O' mountain fastnesses 'n' streams,
A-snipin' Germans in his dreams.
We'd given much fur jes' one look
O' him trout fishin' in home brook.

Thar came the time fur us to move
Into allotted front line groove;
The hull Hill-Billy clan wuz gay,
Right up to our baptismal day
When we wuz thrown across the Ourcq,
'N' hed to fight instead o' talk.

'Twas Twenty-seventh o' July,
When Rainbow outfit wuz the fry;
We shan't forgit our tryst with death,
The way Hun gas cut off our breath,
How ugly all the cannon spoke,
'N' rank 'pon rank jes' shook 'n' broke.

Afore the Twenty-eight hed dawned,
(Day many Satan's serfs we horned),
'N' things to us wuz lookin' blue,
Fum crater bobs lad *four feet two*,
With smile adornin' grimy fiz,
'N' lungs proclaimin': "*Here I is!*"

To fightin' thar wuz added vim,
At sight o' *Alabama Jim!*
The Forty-second mixed in fray
All thu the night 'n' hull next day;
We recrossed Ourcq 'n' three towns won
Afore our battle's work wuz done.

The hull Hill-Billy clan went wild,
To their speech Cunnel's oaths wuz mild;
They plunged thu hurricane of shot;
They ventured where them Huns dared not;
They pierced foes ranks 'n' bravely died
Fur cause Lord Christ wuz crucified.

When Germans hed ben roughly mauled,
'N' Alabama's roll wuz called,
Fum stretcher of the Amb'lance Train,
('Pon which lay lad found midst the slain—
Lad *four feet two* with smilin' fiz),
Came: "Hi, thar, Cunnel, *here I is!*"

*This was story brought home from the scene of World
War,
And related by one of the Hill-Billy clan;
You know it all now, if you n'er did before,
Such was the way it was told and just how the facts ran.*

August 8, 1918.

A CHRISTIAN CHINESE SOLDIER MAN

High o'er the Quarter's narrow, winding lane,
Wu Tsan, at holly-festooned window pane,
Sat playing idly on her laquered lute
As distantly rose notes of mellow flute.

Below, the Mission's organ strangely pealed
Christ's story as His prophets had revealed;
Its balsam's tapers gleamed with Christmas cheer,—
'Twas there Wu Tsan at Yuletide yesteryear,
Had learned the meaning of the Christian's creed
And riddle of the cornucopia's meed.

The night was sad, at least so Wu Tsan thought;
The moon in silver-braided noose had caught
Her soul, it seemed, and drew it up above,
And stopped the spinning of her spools of love.

*Wu Tsan, silk-robed like hues of eventide,
Mute as an ancient queenly spirit-bride,
Why in thy jewelled ribbon-bark of dreams
Drift lazily along reflection's streams?
Rise from the perfumed cushions in thy nest,
The Mission is the place for heart opprest;
This rarest Christmas Day is now most gone,
So go thank God we were taught Christ was born:
For I, a Christian Chinese soldier man,
Have died in France like true American.*

Such was the message of the distant flute
That filtered through the music of the lute.

*Oh, lofty, God-hewn peaks of Tien-Mu-Shan,
Whose blossom-tapestries the heavens span;
Oh, flower-templed meadows of Hang-Chau,
Oh, liliated waters of Si-Hoo, hear thou:
In France has died, like true American,
Wu Tsan's brave Christian Chinese soldier man.*

Thus did the lute's strings answer weirdly sweet
As notes of flute forsook their rich retreat.

*By cent'ries of transition, I, at last,
Have won release from mortal mask of caste:
A bayonet thrust was key that opened wide
For me the gate beyond the great divide.
So ends my pilgrimage to Wu Tsan's heart,
But lo! though we are long, long kept apart,
Beyond the portals of the turquoise sky,
Some day, some day, Wu Tsan, ah! you and I
Will journey to the Altar of the Blest
In God's eternity of bliss and rest,
Where only spirits of the pure converse
That nobly served in mankind's universe,
That quit the desert of departed time,
The wilderness of Buddah's mystic clime,
And cut adrift from image and from shrine
To which black magic only doth entwine.*

Such were the words that winged from distant flute
As tender grew the music of the lute.

*Through webs of dawn and tassels of mid-day,
Through lavenders and reds of sunset spray,
Where laughing lanterns of my father kept
True vigil with the stars while China slept,
The junks ride down the old Tsientan in peace
Their prowls all carolling without surcease:
"Wu Tsan's brave Christian Chinese soldier man
Has died in France like true American."*

The lute's voice quivered as it softly spoke,
And from her reverie the girl awoke.

Then laying down her precious toy, Wu Tsan
Put on a dress of Christian woman—ran
O'er to the Mission where the organ pealed
Christ's story as His prophets had revealed.

From the New York Evening Post, December 21, 1918.

PSALM OF THE LIBERTY MOTOR

I wing my way, a thing of throbbing might,
Up near the phosphorescent ponds and pools,
And opal fastnesses of star-strewn wreaths
Of ever gleaming stellar dynasties.
I soar toward that depthless rendezvous
Of moons and suns and flaming meteors—
The lavish-lanterned myriad ether seas,
Abysmal oceans of serenity,
In what is called the Outer Universe.
I am the Liberty Motor; I was born
To chant on high America's Hymns of Hope,
Her psalms of Freedom and of Victory.

.
Beneath the sapphire silences of space,
Like radiant hopes and promises of dawn's
Onrushing pearl-plumed cavalcades of light
That mirror pinks of sea's shell-castled depths,
Transmute to myriad saffron-spangled isles
The archipelagos of gray morning mists,
And splash the fading ivory tints of night
With bronze, vermilion, crimson, scarlet, gold—
Lo! PEACE has come in wake of blighting WAR,
To banish curse of lust, the shame of strife,
Enthroned its sovereignty, proclaim its right
To rule again with healing, friendly thoughts
In all the chancels of the human soul.

.
The daybreak's winds are but the sighs of dawn,
Morn's dews are but the joyous tears of time;
The present's anger and transgressions are
But wide-blown pollen of tranquillity
For men of generations, and of centuries,
Of ages long devised by God, but yet unborn.

(Written November 12, 1918, the day following the Armistice, and published in the New York Evening Post, December 7, 1918. It was the Liberty Motor which played so great a part in American aerial achievements in the World War. Before the Armistice 13,574 Liberty Motors had been completed; of this number 4,435 were shipped to the American Expeditionary Force and 1,025 to the Allies. American air forces took part in the battles of Chateau-Thierry, St. Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne conflicts. They downed 755 enemy airplanes and lost 357 of their own.)

THE RED CROSS NURSE OF THE A. E. F.

Comrade and sister and angel of cheer,
Soldier, true, tender, who never knew fear.
Legs to the limb-shorn and eyes to the blind,
Staff to the lame, hope to terror-trapped mind.
Ears to the deaf, likewise nerves to the numb,
Tongue to the fellow in battle struck dumb.
Sunshine to shell-shocked and tonic to sick,
Always up front where the fighting was thick.

Friend to the helpless, and mentor and guide
To gallant spirits submerged by war tide.
Balm to the weary and strength to the weak,
Shield against sorrow when hours were bleak,
Sentinel watchful of fever's dread dreams,
Shepherd unshaken by gas-seared lad's screams.
Pillow to shrapnel-torn, pain-racked boy's head,
Mourner to unknown, uncited, brave dead.

Mother to dying, unselfish with love,
Weeping when souls journeyed onward above.
Vanguard of lorry and its precious load,
Daring bombed village and cannon-churned road.
Where'er surgeons moved, whate'er army's goal,
Her perils great as No Man's Land patrol.
Joy to the homeless, protector of wronged,
Springtime to aged whose days she prolonged.

Endless and tedious were all of her tasks,
Long were her vigils and frequent her fasts.
She ne'er sought favors or honors or praise;
Her sacrifice none can ever appraise.
Whate'er her trials e'er bright were her views,
Soothing and heart'ning her bits of home news.
Often was empty her worn, slender purse;
Often *just* God thought of our Red Cross Nurse.

November 23, 1918. To Judith Gambrell Wiley, of Macon, Ga., R. C. N.,
A. E. F.

AHOY!

Old Glory's Armada from Europe advances!
Up! Forward with all of your unsheathed love-lances!
Swift o'er the horizon our homing fleet's riding,
To winds of the East and the West joy confiding.

From front line of sullen sea trenches, unheeding
The ocean's commotion o'er dash of their speeding
Come dreadnoughts, destroyers, come colliers, sub-
chasers,
Torpedo boats, battleships, cruisers, mine-tracers,
In foam of the blazoned blue crests all entangled,
Their bows, turrets, bridges, decks, cannon, spray-
spangled.

All, all! are through bridging U. S., France, and
Britain
(Achievement that never can fully be written)
For passage of millions of high-purposed fighters
Who stemmed, rolled back tide of the burly Hun
blighters.

In, in! through the port's gates, past Ambrose Light
racing,
Comes Yankee Armada that helped in effacing
The vassals of ruthless, vainglorious Viking.
Home, home! with flags, pennons a-wing, they come
hiking,
With steam crowding boilers, their engine hearts
pounding,
Aye, t'wards Sandy Hook and the Hudson they're
bounding.

Far down in each ship valiant legion is stoking
Huge furnaces; clogged coal and ashes e'er poking.

Up, up! New York, hurry! see mem'orable meeting;
Our home fleet's dropped anchor to give hearty greet-
ing—

Our home vigilantes, game all through war's worries,
Through tempests, tornadoes, gales, winter's mad
flurries.

The tugs, ferries, lighters, prepare rousing speeches,
Coast, trans-ocean liners their share of glad screeches.

Get ready to let loose shrill broadsides of cheering
For men of Annap'lis, bluejackets God-fearing!
Get ready your salvos for sailors who perished
For down trodden nations, and country they cherished—
Loved lads who are sleeping on ocean bed's pillows
Beneath the Atlantic and North Sea's bleak billows.

Aye! Forward with all of your unsheathed love lances!
Old Glory's Armada from Europe advances!
Swift o'er the horizon our homing fleet's riding,
To winds of the East and the West joy confiding.

(From the New York Evening Post, December 24, 1918. Written in commemoration of the return of the American fleet from European waters following the Armistice.)

IN HELL TO-NIGHT

(The American Marines smashed the Germans at Chateau-Thierry yesterday—
Associated Press Dispatch, June 7, 1918.)

In Hell there is weeping and wailing to-night,
 In Stygian pits there's dismay;
Hell's scions of sin scatter broadcast in fright,
O'er all Hades' revels has fallen a blight;
 There isn't seared soul that is gay.

Old Satan in deep mourning vestments is clad,
 His hopes have gone blooey, alas!
He calls his prime minister "rotter" and "cad,"
For news that he's heard has made him awful mad;
 He dubs himself "bally old ass."

From Kaiser has come: "The U. S. A. Marine,
 Has busted his traces, got loose;
"Has wriggled his way through my poison gas-screen,
"Just when my pet war is proceeding serene,
 "And caught me asleep in his noose.

"Dear Komrad, this wild Yank, your pal has ill-treated,
 "My life-long ambition delayed;
"My Landwehr he's jolted, smashed, all but defeated,
"With howls of derision my pleadings he's greeted;
 "He'll cost me my job, I'm afraid."

When Satan Bill's message had fully digested,
 He summoned his whole Ku Klux Klan;
Says he: "Lads, a fellow named Pershing's divested,
"My sidekick, the Kaiser, of all he's invested;
 "Bill ain't there in fighting a man."

June 8, 1918.

A TANK THAT WAS

Once of a legion of gallant old busses,
Valiant in many stiff open-sight fusses,
Rumbling and stumbling and cheerfully tumbling,
Follows with chow without once ever grumbling;
Sinking, then rising, his semaphore blinking,
Track treading sprockets and rollers a-clinking;
Heroic his service, and still he is daring,
The maelstrom of battle, ill-faring, not caring.

'Twas he who belonged to a famed aggregation
Whose heavies put crimps in old Europe's foundation,
Led Females of saucy machine chatter, patter,
And Whippets of potent influence and matter.
Ah! he was a blessing when it came to messing,
Caressing, close-pressing, outguessing, distressing,
That human gas geyser, and freedom's dispenser,
The arch aggrandizer—old Wilhelm the Kaiser.

O'er crater and trench, over pill-box he clattered.
Barbed wire, miles deep, he oft ruthlessly shattered,
Cleaved way for the infantry and the artillery,
Motor transport corps and canteen auxiliary.
Through night's deepest shadows he often went reeling.
Blow upon blow unrelentingly dealing.
Across No Man's Land all his guns he set blazing.
And routed the foe in a manner amazing.

He was reared of the best somewhere West in U. S.
And the doctrines he thundered caused widespread
distress;
In valleys, e'en alleys, he led hottest fighting,
Hun snaring and wearing, and fondest dreams blight-
ing,
But now he no longer real action is sharing;
He spends all his days behind other Males tearing.
Obsolete? Yes, just a plain supply duffer,
A tank ringed with scars—none did treat German
rougher.

(Written August 17, 1918, and published in the New York Evening Post
November 9, 1918.)

MECHANICS OF THE CORPS

When winds of East and winds of West shall chant peace
 reveille,
And war's last echoes overseas shall rise and melt away;
When garlanded tranquillity shall quilt the blight of might,
Let's not forget those grimy boys who helped in every fight—

The lads in khaki overalls: MECHANICS of the corps
Whose arms were cotta pin and bolt, wrench, carbon scraper,
 saw,
File, oil can, jack, blowout-patch, nut, screwdriver, and
 those things
In kit of motor transport truck to which the service clings.

Perhaps none wears the Croix de Guerre, or D. S. C., but
 they
Were right there in the thickest of the deadliest affray;
They braved the dangers of barrage, the shock of bursting
 shells,
They rode the seas of searing gas, plunged into scores of
 hells.

Into the depths of pits of pain they groped and found their
 way,
Across mined poppy fields they dashed to where maimed
 doughboys lay;
They flung away their lives with joy at thought of helping
 free
The world from tyrant's heel that sought to crush men's
 liberty.

MECHANICS? Yea, that's all they were—from country,
town garage,
From plant and factory that turned out all motor cars at
large.
Their place was not in front-line trench, the listening post
—and rush
Of infantry up, over top, when dawn's sylphs deigned to
blush.

Behind the lines, on air-bombed roads, across the battlefield,
In dead o' night on No Man's plains o'er which war's thunders
pealed,
They trailed along with ambulance, with ammunition train,
With all supplies that moved a-wheel when there were miles
to gain.

Their duty was to keep U. S. transports in good repair;
Their duty was to mend the breaks when breaks were foul
or fair;
To diagnose all motor ills, dry water-jacket's tears,
See that ignition kept its faith with bearings, hubs, and
gears.

So when the winds of East and West again to calm give birth,
When lanterns of the peopled skies flash "peace is come on
earth,"
Let none of us e'er once forget those grimy, smiling tads,
Whom fame and glory overlooked in crowning other lads.

(Written October 3, 1918, and published in the New York Evening Post, November 16, 1918.)

SHUFFLE DEM FEET EN GIMME YO' EYES

Jeff Broger wuz en eb'ny lad,
Top Sergeant ob our crew,
He'd make mos' all de rookies glad
Dey hed war work to do.
Et Wheeler he wuz all de cheese,
Wuz quite impo'tant pusson,
De mos' disgruntled he'd appease,
Wif'out a lot o' cussin'.

I gets so I wakes en mah sleep,
En stops mah midnight prayin',
En gits to movin' boff mah feet
Thinkin' I hears him sayin':

"Gimme yo' eyes en shuffle dem feet,
"En pint dem mouser guns;
"Ef ebber you gits a chance to meet
"One ob dem hungry Huns,
"Des blaze 'way straight es you kin shoot,
"En den climb ober top,
"En pry 'em loose fum all dere loot,
"Wif bay'net let 'em flop."

Jeff he sure wuz thar wif de stuff,
While trainin' cotton pickers;
His tactics warn't hard ner rough,
Or drillin' full o' sticklers.
His dream o' life wuz to git shown
'Bout es brave army leader,
En thu all Georgia hev sel' known
Es champeen cannon feeder.

He gits hissels' down on one knee,
Feigns to start bones a-rollin',
Pretends he's swingin' han' dats free,
Gits faded es he's tollin':

"Tention you all, dar, 'tention you all,
"Come on you cotton pickers,
"I'm reelin' off de furst roll call,
"Wif jaz ob iv'ry klickers.
"Jes shuffle dem feet en gimme yo' eyes,
"En git to ord'rin' rifles;
"Now pint dem guns en when I cries:
"Shoot! Don' git skeer'd by trifles."

De Major-Gen'ral stops one day;
Says: "Ain't no method better;
"Et ain't jes' 'cordin' to mah way,
"Or 'cordin' to code's letter.
"But keep on goin', Sergeant Jeff,
You sure'll git promoted.
"I'll see's you ain't 'mong darkies lef'
"When army gits impo'ted."

Jes' soon's we gits across to France,
En Jeff wins chevron honors,
We gits word we's got to advance,
Fer Germans wuz right 'pon us.

"Shuffle dem feet, dar, shuffle!" Jeff shouts,
"En pint dem mouser guns;
"Be sure you takes the shortest routs,
"Ef cornered by dem Huns.
"Jes' gimme yo' eyes, jes' gimme yo' eyes,
"Remember dat right 'bout face,
"Means all dat simple term implies,
"Ef us dey 'gins to CHASE."

April 4, 1918.

CALL OF THE GAS HOUND

Quick! Crank up! Chug with me to Belgium and France!
Come, take to the high road, and see the Hun dance;
I'll bump you 'cross country, up, over, down hill,
I'll give you adventure—wild longings fulfil.
I'm ambulance, troop train, I'm U. S. A. truck,
I'm all of those things linked with motors and muck.
To keep me in order, and watch my ignition,
To carry small arms, also mixed ammunition,
I need operators, and scores of 'lectricians,
And welders, wheelwrights, and good mechanics.

The nurses, they call me—don't bawl it—"a dear,"
When there's dying to harvest and shell-shocked to cheer.
Some "Buds" say I'm ugly and some dub me a "toy;"
But I'll bet I'm some beauty to khaki-clad boy
Whom fate's double-crossed on the road to Berlin—
The boy who grins gayly when wounded—all in!

Hi! Are you red-blooded and hell-bent on action,
And have you real heartaches to whack the Hun faction?
And have you the nerve to pitch in, smile, and rough it,
Dodge shells and machine pills and whole world-war buffet,
To stand up as a fighter for earth's grandest Nation
Until you are blown through a hole of creation?
Are you primed with the stuff to hold up in derision
The whole German army—not a mere division?

Hi! Come, carry rations, mail, whatnot to trenches,
Brave all of the blinding, malicious gas stenches;
Be up near the front line at the second of Zero
When every last doughboy Goes Over a hero;
Help gather the wounded—our loved ones and foemen—
Whatever their rank, regimental cognomen.

From dawn unto midnight and onward to daybreak,
Astride shrapnel tempest and TNT earthquake,
Let's keep at the heels of the Treat 'Em Rough darlings,
The Infantry, Gunners, despite the foe's snarlings.
Through city, town, village, come let us go chugging,
And far o'er the Rhine let's help Pershing keep plugging.
No road is too narrow or slushy or rutty
To stay me from setting the Kaiser's bunch nutty.

Hi! Onward I'll rumble with headlights all glowing,
My engine's heart throbbing with joy overflowing,
My valves jointly causing internal commotion,
My cylinders chanting with passion, emotion,
Magneto faith flashing to the commutator,
Wheels whirling to catch up with war's instigator,
Each spark-plug its duty for freedom fulfilling,
Carb'reter with gas life in me e'er instilling,
Gears perfect, springs sprightly, true my differential,
Transmission behaving with sense that's essential,
Fan, my radiator unselfishly cooling,
The batt'ry feed coils best of juice sanely pooling,
My muffler cut-out open wide and ear-splitting,
The trusty exhaust clouds of carbon, flame spitting,
My axles, oil-feeder in pink of condition,
The horn honking hope Hun will soon reach perdition.

Oh, heed ye the call of the Gas Hound Brigade,
Don't miss a choice place in the Pershing parade;
Quick! Crank up! Chug with me to Belgium and France,
You'll n'er again have such a wonderful chance.

(Written September 23, 1918, following a county-wide call for recruits for the Motor Transport Corps of the A. E. F., and published in the New York Evening Post, November 2, 1918.)

IN LONDON TOWN

December 26, 1918

The Eagle spread his pinions full,
Traditions boldly brushed aside,
And o'er Atlantic swiftly sped
To Isle where Lion doth abide.

The Lion roared with unfeigned joy,
He bowed and doffed his ancient crown,
At Charing Cross, Trafalgar Square,
When Eagle reached Old London Town.

The Lion waved the Stars and Stripes,
Day ne'er was born of such renown,
The Eagle flapped the Union Jack,
In London Town, Old London Town.

The Eagle cried: "God Save the King!"
"Star-Spangled Banner," Lion sang;
Queen, Bobbie, Wac, Gob, Tommie cheered,
And all of Britain's church bells rang.

That vale of memories—the Strand,
Fleet Street and Oxford felt the thrill
Which spread from Pall Mall's mart of dreams
Unto the sphere of Ludgate Hill.

Big Ben awoke Westminster and
The House of Parliament; St. Paul's
Great organ pealed Old London's pride.
Amazement stirred Haymarket's stalls.

"O welcome, brother," Lion roared,
So all the Seven Seas might hear,
"By Shakespeare's ghost and Milton's shade,
I'm jolly glad, Sam, you are here.

"I drink full cup to happiness,
To lasting peace, joy, blessings, cheer,
To all Old Glory's gallant hosts,
Through many a golden, prosp'rous year."

The Lion waved the Stars and Stripes,
Day ne'er was born of such renown,
The Eagle flapped the Union Jack,
In London Town, Old London Town.

(Written December 27, 1918, on the occasion of the visit of President Woodrow Wilson to London, and published in the New York Evening Post, January 4, 1919.)

CHARGE OF THE KAISER'S ROCKING HORSE

(A day in June, 1914, in the Palace at Berlin.)

Down and up and up and down,
Charged the Kaiser's Rocking Horse,
Keeping in one spot, of course,
Not once mindful of the force
Of impending woe and loss,
And his master's deep remorse.
Down and up and up and down,
Charged the Kaiser's Rocking Horse.

*O sturdy steed that rocks me at my will,
O noble symbol of my royal train:
Dumb, woodenheaded, brainless, thoughtless, nil—
Wild longings overwhelm my fetish brain.
I'd make investment in a throne in Hell,
Start world-wide conflagration as a lark,
Form partnership with Satan and compel
Him to build pyre of crime and stoke each spark.*

Down and up and up and down,
Charged the Kaiser's Rocking Horse,
Keeping in one spot, of course,
Not once mindful of the force
Of impending woe and loss,
And his master's deep remorse.
Down and up and up and down,
Charged the Kaiser's Rocking Horse.

*I'd scatter brands of wretchedness with strife,
Repudiate all covenants of right,
Scrap treaties, squelch diplomacies, and knife
Regard for all the decencies of might.
I'd murder with a lavishness n'er known,
Scorch men with flaming gas and blind with shot;
In all earth's pastures I'd have war seeds sown,
I'd let trapped foemen bleed to death and rot.*

Down and up and up and down,
Charged the Kaiser's Rocking horse,
Keeping in one spot, of course,
Not once mindful of the force
Of impending woe and loss,
And his master's deep remorse.
Down and up and up and down,
Charged the Kaiser's Rocking Horse

*I'd have ten million pairs of haunting eyes,
Look out on me from sepulchres of pain;
With foul invective I would answer cries,
Of "Quarter!" from the wounded midst the slain.
The air from helpless sleeping babes I'd steal,
So they might have no further chance to breathe;
Their mothers I'd crush under iron heel;
New agonizing cataclysms weave.*

Down and up and up and down,
Charged the Kaiser's Rocking Horse,
Keeping in one spot, of course,
Not once mindful of the force
Of impending woe and loss,
And his master's deep remorse.
Down and up and up and down,
Charged the Kaiser's Rocking Horse.

*I'd level monuments of ancient fame,
All spiritual truths refute with lies,
Drive virtue into rendezvous of shame,
Make life a cauldron of relentless spies.
I'd crucify humanity with woe,
Have angels go insane at sight of me;
I'd brazenly let God Almighty know,
I'd gone upon wild homicidal spree.*

Down and up and up and down, etc.

July 3, 1915.

PART II

OLD GLORY

Exalting as both dawn and sunset are,
As eloquently colorful their hues,
As richly jewelled all their realms afar,
As radiantly beautiful their dews,
There's nothing in God's universe like you,
Naught comparable in His or mortal sight,
To splendor of your starry field of blue,
Broad and inspiring stripes of red and white.

Unfurled you are like Heaven-flaming scroll,
Proclaiming all that's noble, good and clean;
You are to eye what music is to soul,
To heart all justice, law and order mean.
You are like symbol of eternal light,
A torch divine designed to blind, dismay
Transgressors of the majesty of right,
And salvage states from serfdom and decay.

Armistice Day, November 11, 1918.

TO CHRISTMAS DAY

A world well weary of its wounds and grief
Awaits the Holy pageantry of thine,
Beneath the archways of all things Divine,
In sanctified recesses of Belief,
Though joys thou bringest may be all too brief,
And cup we lift lose sacramental wine,
And our expectancy too swift align
With hopes ephemeral as wind and leaf.

Magician of majestic mercies, spread
Thy tents of tenderness and trust and truth,
For homing spirits of our valiant dead—
Blown flowers of our Nation's sturdy youth—
Return to soothe and satisfy our sorrows,
To mirror missions of unmined to-morrows.

(Written December 19, 1918, and published in the Saturday Literary Review
of the New York Evening Post, December 20, 1918.)

GLORIFIED

Belgium! . . . France!
We feel—and we believe,
Peace now pervades
Cathedrals of nocturnal calm;
And in the chapels of our souls
We hear the cadence
Of her soothing psalms
And vesper carollings.

We feel—and we believe,
The blighting heels
Of tyrant's lust-mad hordes,
The hideous echoes
Of their surly tramp,
No more will chill
The altars of thy woe.

We feel—and we believe,
The turmoil of the battlefield
Is hushed; the reign
Of misery unspeakable
Is at an end;
The shrieks of terrifying,
Death-charged steel
Are stilled.

We feel—and we believe,
That bombs of searing gas
And murderous flame
Hurled from on high
By savages a-wing,
Will never more maim, torture
Sleeping babes,
Disturb the cradle vigil
And the prayers
Of motherhood.

We feel—and we believe,
That those brave youths—
Two hundred thousand score
Or more—who died for thee
Sleep in their shell-churned
Sepulchres of clay,
'Neath fields and marshes,
Woods and meadowlands,
Near levelled temples
Which long symbolized
The birth in Bethlehem
Of Human Rights,
The gift of Charity
From Mount Olivet,
Golgotha's salvaging
Of liberty for men
Whate'er their race,
Their color or their creed—
They sleep serene!

Belgium! . . . France!
We feel—and we believe,
The deeds, the sacrifices,
And the sufferings
Of noble youth—
Two hundred thousand score
Or more—
Who rallied on thy soil
From all ends of the earth,
To stem, beat back
The war-lord's mighty tide,
And perished there,
Have glorified
The tender Love and Mercy,
And Eternal Faith
Of Galilee.

(Published in the New York Evening Post, October 22, 1918. Inspired by the success of the American Expeditionary Force and the breaking down of the German defence. Less than a month later, November 11, the Armistice eventuated.)

LOOK UP!

Courage, world! New hope is dawning;
Nature's priests of peace give warning.
Crests of chaos they are riding,
Shell-swept fields and meadows hiding.
Ravished soil they are now healing;
Into shattered homes they're stealing.
Over silent hearths they're treading
And their emerald nets are spreading,
In lorn gardens they've set blooming
Roses of their sacred grooming.
Ivy 'round maimed trees entwining,
Trysting arbours they are lining
With arbutus; larkspur wedding
To the poppy coyly red'ning
Mid wild clusters of white clover,
Dandelion, that ruthless rover,
Daisy with her gold wings flapping
And the cowslip slyly napping.
Violets they've roused from sweet pillows,
'Wakened asters near tall willows;
Heliotrope they've e'en set smiling
At the lilac's harmless guiling.
Lo! they've set the swallows singing,
Jaybird, wood-lark, magpie winging,
Partridge to his cheerful drumming,
Thrush and robin, laughing, humming;
Made the ant hills rise, grow wider,
Broaden out the webs of spider.
Patience, world! Look up, this morning;
Nature's priests of peace give warning.
War's dread chaos they will banish;
Blight of Teuton fore'er will vanish.

(Written for and published in the New York Evening Post, May 24, 1918.
Suggested by a paragraph, in an account of the first real action American
troops engaged in overseas, which told of the appearance of flowers on the
battlefield under the warm Spring sunshine.)

OUR SOLDIER DEAD

Beyond world that too oft breaks faith with God,
Souls of crusaders of a righteous cause,
Have gone rejoicing unto Him on high,
With great report of mighty task well done.
Their valiant deeds, unselfish sacrifice,
Are garlands in ten times ten million hearts.

Not only crowded byways of the world,
Hills, mountains, valleys, meadows, moorlands, plains,
But solitude of space, the wilderness,
The forest, desert, ocean, icy wastes,
Have been exalted by their sacrifice.
Their priceless gift for human freedom shall
Be to the thoughts of Christian men e'er more,
What food is to the famished child and beast,
What rain is to parched grain and drooping flower,
What sunshine is to everything on earth.

Down through the ages may it ever seem,
When peaceful peoples look toward the skies,
That stars above are windows through which smile
All those loved lads who left their homeland shores,
To rescue liberty for fellow beings,
And gave all that was possible to give.

(Written September 2, 1918, in memory of Lieutenant Quincy Sharpe Mills, Co. G, 168th Infantry, killed in action at Epieds, France, July 26, 1918. During his service as a reporter on the New York Evening Sun, Lieutenant Mills showed the same devotion to duty as resulted in his death overseas. He was a native of North Carolina and a most loyal and useful citizen of New York.)

QUILTED

Opened wide were Arctic's gates,
Out whirled army of Snowflakes:
Southward they were bent on speeding,
And in unison were pleading:

*Blow us southward, Wintry Wind,
Though the eyes of sky you blind;
Hurry us to Belgium, France,
E'er the frosts in earth advance.
Our far north home we are jilting,
We must hasten to our quilting
Couches of a vast brave legion
Nestling in a hallowed region.
Sons and Fathers nobly sleeping,
For whom Womanhood is weeping,
We'll keep warm 'till loyal Spring
Soldiers' beds with garlands ring.*

When o'er oceans, forests, lakes,
Wintry Wind whirled those Snowflakes,
Thus did he then widely bluster
With all kindness he could muster:

*Peerless Nuns of pearly whiteness,
Of Celestial, fleecy lightness,
Go, ye, spread your silver quilt
Over beds their comrades built.
Keep them, Snowflakes, warm by day,
Warm by night till in rolls May.
Spring all sun's gems then will net,
Color pyres she will set;
Conflagrations start of hues—
Yellows, purples, pinks and blues;
Robe the ruts of desolation,
Scatter sweets of consolation,
Emerald grass-cathedrals rear,
Hills and meadowlands endear
With beloved blossom-brides
From tree-templed countrysides.*

(Written for the Saturday Literary Review of the New York Evening Post,
November 4, 1918, and published December 7, 1918.)

THE UNKNOWN

ARMISTICE DAY, 1921

A crown of sunbeams Heaven's looms are weaving,
The dews of morn dawn's magic mists enfold,
The winds forgotten carols are retrieving,
Day mantles earth with wreaths and palms of gold.

Hushed is world's feathered choirs' joyous singing
In chancels of field, meadowland and wood;
An end has come to insect minstrels' winging,
The forest sighs as if it understood.

Soft are the whisp'rings of sea's white-plumed billows,
Subdued is laughter of wild mountain streams,
Stilled is the chanting of lone pines to willows,
The brook forsakes its roundelays for dreams.

The ocean sad and solemnly goes rolling,
With cosmic sorrows mirrored on her breast;
The breakers' tears are beyond surf's controlling,
The restless wave sobs 'neath its silver crest.

Three muffled notes celestial bugle's sounding,
Attentive are night's starry hosts in sky;
Through space Unknown American's soul is bounding—
For us he fought, for us he dared to die!

(Written November 11, 1921, in commemoration of the unknown American soldier whose burial at Arlington symbolizes the heroic death of all patriots whose deeds and valor and supreme sacrifice in the World War helped salvage liberty for mankind.)

THE RETREAT

Day's myriad legions of mist-haloed queens
Out of the azure gardens grandly trooped,
And hurried down the ruby-ribboned slopes
Beyond the rose-realms of the western sky.
Then far across the tranquil Twilight's trails
The golden tresses of a Sunray, robed
In opaline richness, flashed like threads of flame.
Quick came and went majestic Eventide
With her coquettish vanguard of pearl greys.
Night followed with her tapers all ablaze
In solemn splendor 'round a waning moon
Whose beam, like silver catafalque, seemed bound
For gold sarcophagus in blossom boughs.

Before a tidal-wave of bristling steel,
That sprang to life as swift as Summer squall,
The War Lord's boastful, lust-crazed, murd'rous horde,
Fled beaten, frightened like blood-thirsty pack
Of wolves which had mismeasured strength of prey.
Across broad, flowered meadowlands and fields,
Beyond the gray old walls of Paris they
Had planned to storm, the Tyrant's shameless serfs
Made haste to find a place they hoped was safe.
Along the Marne there rose the fearsome cry:
"They shall not pass! Lord God, they shall not pass!"

(From the Evening Sun, September, 1914. The Battle of the Marne began on September 6th, and ended on the 10th when the Germans reached the extreme point of advance and were forced to retreat to the River Aisne and "dig in" to save themselves.)

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi! Mississippi!
Mother of a valiant host;
Of Creation's cherished homelands,
There are lads that love thee most;

Lads in distant France and Belgium,
Wading through the woes of might,
Stalking death in World War cauldron,
Dying gladly for what's right.

.

Nymphs of Dawn surge forward, splashing
Through receding seas of Night,
Scatter wide their pinks and poppies,
Glorify thy hearths with light.

Wraiths of Morn in tinsel'd splendor,
Garland thee with spangled hue,
From the lavish loom of Heaven,
Veiled by tapestries of blue.

Knights of Day in dazzling trappings,
Troop across thy highland stiles,
Robe thee with their golden satins,
Warm thee with enchanting smiles.

Nature's fairies, in thy gardens,
Brilliant blossom bonnets mould,
While thy roving roguish songbirds,
Carol trysting tales of old.

.

Mississippi! Mississippi!
May the Sentries of the Fates,
Keep the lanterns of God's blessings,
Ever burning at thy gates.

(Written August 11, 1918, when the War Office casualty lists told a story of sacrifice on the part of Mississippi troops in action overseas.)

ON THE HINDENBURG LINE

SEPTEMBER 29, 1918

(Private Alpheus E. Stewart, of Jordantown, Texas, Company G, 107th Infantry—old 7th Regiment—27th Division, A. E. F., having been wounded in the head, advanced with fearless disregard for his own personal safety against an enemy machine-gun nest and succeeded in putting it out of action by bombing the gunners. He was killed immediately thereafter by enemy machine-gun fire.—U. S. WAR DEPARTMENT REPORT.)

Somewhere around Le Catalet he lies,
Unmindful of dread cannon's wrathful roar,
Of flaming gas, invader's surly cries,
Hun sniper lurking back of dugout door.

He came and went like vagrant summer dream,
Eyes glowing 'neath a clear, untroubled brow,
Face mirroring a valiant soul agleam—
Soul of one who, when asked to die, *knew how!*

October 7, 1918.

LEAD US AGAIN

Father, our hopes are bivouacked in our hearts,
Our fears and prayers are all a-wing to Thee!
Stretch out Thy friendly hand, we humbly ask,
And lead us with Thy clear, resourceful light
Out of the desolate darkness of our time,
As Thou didst in the bleak, black ages gone.
Give us again the Sight that we may see,
Set up once more our fallen house of peace,
Rekindle reason, faith, good will on earth,
And shut out glare of shallow pride of kings.

The flow'r of sturdy nations withers fast,
And fruits of mellowed genius rot apace
In shell swept trench of many battlefields;
Babes sleep unmothered in their cradle nests,
While orphaned children weep in wakeful dreams,
And women robbed of fathers, husbands, sons,
Trudge troubled, spent, through dust clouds of the
plough.
Christ did not die upon the cross for this!

(Written and published in the New York Evening Sun, August 31, 1914.
About this time all the world was beginning to feel the effects of the month-
old conflagration in Europe and people everywhere were praying that the
war and its horrors be brought to a speedy end.)

COMES CHRISTMAS DAY

Across swift shifting sea of time,
To sun-kissed shores of every clime,
Like some celestial roundelay,
From God's own land comes Christmas Day!

Across the busy plains of life,
O'er battlements of earthly strife,
The sorrows of man to allay
With love and joy, comes Christmas Day.

Across the shallow vale of sin,
The lost and fallen ones to win
Back to the light of Him, by way
Of kindness, comes Christmas Day.

Across the sands of suffering,
The wounds of sad and ill to fling
Into the whirlpool of decay,
With cheer and hope comes Christmas Day.

Across the desert of despair,
The woes that righteous souls do bear,
To scatter broadcast in dismay
With laughing love, comes Christmas Day.

Across swift shifting sea of time,
To sun-kissed shores of every clime,
All grief and pain to drive away,
With happiness, comes Christmas Day!

Published in New York Sunday World, December, 1904. Revised,
Christmas, 1918.

IN VAIN?

*From poison gas, shot, shrapnel, cruel pain,
Died we—ten thousand score or more—in vain?*

Up from our vaults of shattered steel and clay
We rise—the Spirits of Your Valiant Dead—
To reason that the issue of to-day
Is issue for which freemen fought and bled.
Let not unmoral partisanship prevail,
Nor Senate cabal's shameless treachery,
Tear down the barriers of unmasked deceit;
Say with your votes the Peace League shall, must be!

*From poison gas, shot, shrapnel, cruel pain,
Died we—ten thousand score or more—in vain?*

Have you forgot the mad king's lust for power,
His wanton crime, unholy act, foul deed?
Have you forgot the desolate whirlwind hour
When we went forth to meet the mortal need—
When we rolled back the tyrant's human sea,
And braved the cordons of his fiendish hordes,
So all the world might be forever free
Of Kaisers, Emp'rors and accurs'd war lords?

*From poison gas, shot, shrapnel, cruel pain,
Died we—ten thousand score or more—in vain?*

Have you forgot the lame, the halt, the blind;
The gruesome glooms of terror-ravished fears;
The shrieks from cauldron of the shell-shocked mind;
The trench-stench tortured of four bitter years?
Have you forgot that wild, tempestuous day
When whole line of the foe was in retreat;
And what an awful price we had to pay
Before we made the Hun confess defeat?

*From poison gas, shot, shrapnel, cruel pain,
Died we—ten thousand score or more—in vain?*

Our spirits surge across the homeland shore,
To plead for cause for which brave legions fell;
To plead that there be bestial strife no more—
No more a hurricane of Hunnish Hell.
We gave up all God gave to youth to give;
We quenched with blood flames of rank cowardice.
That all mankind in peace might always live,
We thought we made the final sacrifice!

*From poison gas, shot, shrapnel, cruel pain,
Died we—ten thousand score or more—in vain?*

(Written in support of the advocacy by James M. Cox, Governor of Ohio and Democratic candidate for the Presidency of the United States, of Woodrow Wilson's proposed League of Nations. Published in the New York Evening Post, November 1 and 2, 1920.)

A DUD

I never was in front line trench,
Nor list'ning post;
Nor with the Belgians, English, French,
Nor Pershing's host.

I never traversed No Man's Land,
Nor sensed the sigh
Of one quick to heed stern command
To fight and die.

Projectile's all-disturbing shriek,
I never heard;
Nor just what language bombs did speak,
From man-wrought bird.

Machine-gun, hand grenade and gas,
I never knew,
Nor cootie, trench-mouse, army ass,
Shell-shock, nor flu.

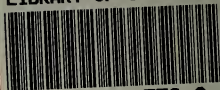
The battlefield on which I served,
And never fell,
Was far from what I e'er deserved,
I'm frank to tell.

I did my bit with printer's ink,
Shears, paste-pot, quill;
I got no nearer World War brink,
Than Park Row grill.

It wasn't 'cause I lacked the will,
To be a "Bud;"
'Twas circumstances made me nil,
And World War dud.

October 19, 1918.

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