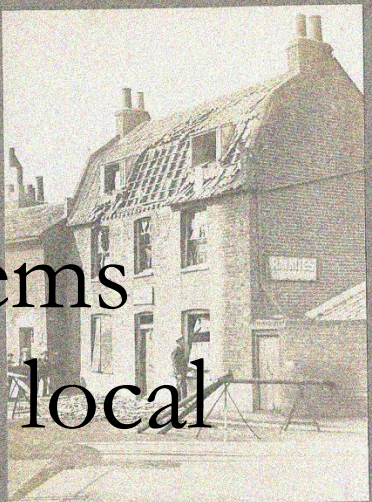
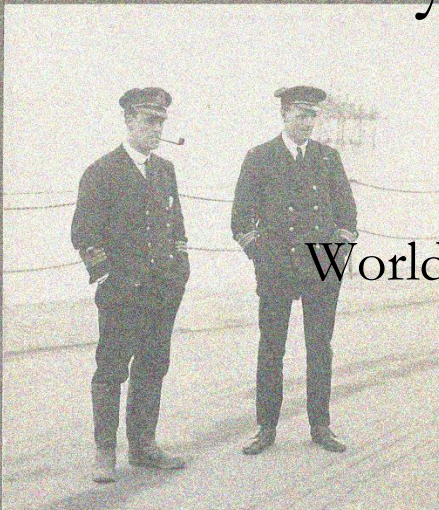


Chief Petty Officer Fife in Fancy Dress



The Explosion - Sep 20th 1917

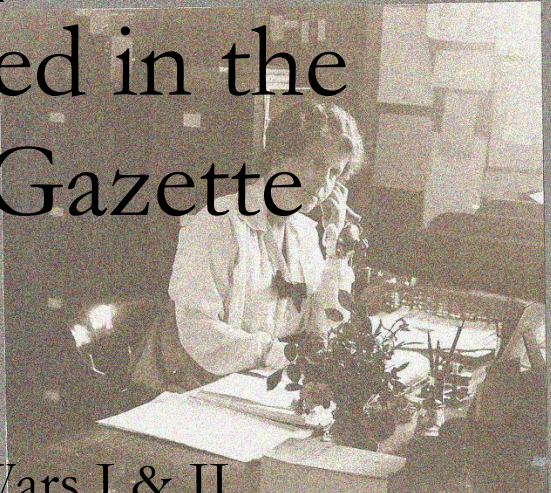
War poems written by local people as published in the Ilkley Gazette



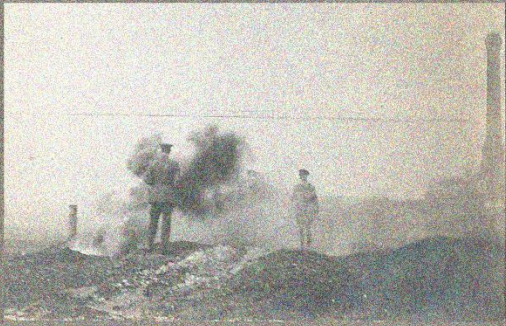
World Wars I & II

At Dover

Wing Commander Brock RN Eng^r Lt-Commander Curre RN
[Killed at Zeebrugge 22/4/18]



Miss Rowe - Secretary



Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| FOREWORD..... | 1 |
| WORLD WAR I..... | 2 |
| “FIGHTING TOMMY”..... | 3 |
| “RAISE THE FLAG”..... | 4 |
| A NATIONS PRAYER..... | 5 |
| TO THE MOTHERS OF OUR SOLDIERS..... | 6 |
| WHEN NIGHT COMES..... | 8 |
| A POEM OF DEATH..... | 9 |
| JOYS OF MUDLARK CAMP..... | 10 |
| HEROES OF HOME..... | 12 |
| A MARCHING SONG..... | 13 |
| BOY O’ MINE..... | 14 |
| OVERCOMING..... | 16 |
| REMINISCENCE..... | 17 |
| UNITY..... | 18 |
| CONSOLATION – M.L. MCC..... | 19 |
| THE NEW YEAR..... | 21 |
| THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW..... | 21 |
| MEMORY..... | 22 |
| TRINITY IN UNITY..... | 25 |
| WORK..... | 26 |
| THE PROMISED LAND..... | 27 |
| VIMY RIDGE..... | 29 |
| ROLL CALL E.G.M. | 31 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| THE VALIANT DEAD | 32 |
| A HOLIDAY AT ILKLEY | 33 |
| REMEMBRANCE | 35 |
| HOLIDAYS AT ILKLEY | 36 |
| IN MEMORY TO THE FALLEN 1914 – 1918..... | 38 |
| THE ILKLEY WAR MEMORIAL | 39 |
| A NEW YEAR’S WISH | 41 |
| AFTER NEUVE CHAPELLE – ROLL CALL..... | 42 |
| WORLD WAR II | 44 |
| “THE WARDEN” | 45 |
| ISLANDS OF THE SEA..... | 46 |
| RESOLUTION..... | 47 |
| “IF” (After Rudyard Kipling)..... | 48 |
| THAT BACK SEAT | 49 |
| HOPES PERSPECTIVE | 50 |
| THE ROYAL NAVY WANTS A “SUB”..... | 51 |
| THE SWEETEST SMELL..... | 52 |
| PEACE | 53 |
| THE PIKE..... | 54 |
| CALLING ALL DALESMEN | 55 |
| THE LAST LINE..... | 56 |
| WARMONGERS | 57 |
| NATIONAL PRAYER | 58 |
| A WHARFEDALE MEMORY | 58 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| GAIN BY LOSS | 59 |
| FOOTPATHS | 60 |
| WINGS FOR VICTORY | 61 |
| A STRONGER THAN HERCULES..... | 62 |
| TO OUR ENERGETIC WOMEN | 64 |
| THE SONG OF THE BOMBERS | 65 |
| THE CHAIN | 66 |
| HOME ON LEAVE..... | 67 |
| WHARFEDALE..... | 68 |
| A CANDLE..... | 69 |
| CHINS UP ON THE CHIN..... | 71 |
| THE FAG | 72 |
| DETOUR..... | 72 |
| OLD ENGLAND | 74 |
| THE HARBINGER OF SPRING..... | 75 |

FOREWORD

Poetry was a regular inclusion in many issues of the Ilkley Gazette during both World Wars. I have decided that some of this poetry needs to be read by a wider audience today for a greater appreciation of what the war meant to civilians and soldiers alike. Alongside poems by Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley et al, appeared poems by local people often with initials and the name of the place in the Ilkley district from where the people originated. Some were written from trenches, desert, jungles, land and sea and a few were written by aircrew and sent by their loving families to the Ilkley Gazette offices.

The topics covered in the poems covered life, death, dreams, love, the places where they lived, and in a number of cases expressing their adoration of the beauty of Ilkley & Wharfedale. I hope all the readers will share their views with other lovers of poetry and help them to understand more fully the impact of both wars on the Ilkley populace. I wish to thank Newsquest (Yorkshire and North East) Ltd, various editors and all the staff in the Ilkley Gazette office in Wells Road for their support over the three years of my archival research from the original papers. To Craven Stationery, very many thanks for all their hard work on my behalf. I also wish to thank Tim Howson from Ben Rhydding who has in a very effective and painstaking way word processed the collection a varying quality of poems, for the purposes of digitisation. Copyright is almost impossible to credit due to most of the poems just penned by the author's initials (male and female!).

Readers will note that some of the words are printed in American English, this has been left as published in the Ilkley Gazette.

WORLD WAR I

“FIGHTING TOMMY”

*Marching song by Ben Boothby - Ilkley Gazette
18/09/1914*

Oh. here's to fighting Tommy, with his load upon his back,
And a rifle at his shoulder and a cartridge in his pack!
If he's marching on to glory, or he's going to his death-
Well, he'll set his teeth and face it till he hasn't any breath.
He may hail from foggy London, or from up beyond the Tweed,
Or from Erin's em'rald Island-he's the pick of all his breed!
Let him come from Wales or Devon, or from Manchester or
Crewe,
It matters not 'a little damn, he'll. show what he can do!
He's cheery and he's plucky, and he's full of buck and grit.
He doesn't stoop to dirty ways, for he's brave and clean and fit.
Here's to you, my fighting Tommy!
May you live to see it through,
And come back and take your medal,
For we're mighty proud of you.
So, Tommy, keep your pecker up-the Jack has been unfurled,
And Britain's eyes are on you, with the rest of ,all the world!

Oh here's to fighting Tommy, with heart as true as steel,
Who when he's got it in the neck don't sit him down and squeal!
For he's good at taking punishment, and he'll go until he's lame -
Though he may be rough and ready, he always plays the game.

He's tender with the wounded, and gentle with the sick;
When he gets his marchin' orders – well, he sets about 'em slick!
He's a gentleman by nature, and sure as such he stands,
For K. of K. has asked him to behave in foreign lands!
So he'll always do his duty, and you may bet he'll try
To live a clean white Englishman – and, faith, the same he'll die!
So now, my fighting Tommy,
The best of luck to you!
For Russia, France, and England
Will see this matter through.
So keep your blooming pecker up! We know you for the best.
And when you're home before your King he'll decorate your
chest!

“RAISE THE FLAG”

*Words by Issac Birkhead and B. Kershaw; Music by John
A. Heaton – Ilkley Gazette 11/12/14*

All hail to our Army and Navy,
Three cheers for the red, white and blue,
The emblem of Liberty and power,
Colors ere pure and true.
Union Jack of our Empire,
Waving on land and sea,
Waves a command, a true demand,
For Britannia the brave and free,

Chorus.

Raise the Flag of 'Rights and Liberty,
Union Jack salute on land and sea,
Our patriotic pride, must never be denied,
Salute the Flag of Justice and of Freedom.
Half mast raise the Flag in remembrance ,
Of heroes whose fight is o'er,
Who, fell for the banner of the brave
While fighting at the Fore.
Long may we praise them in memory,
Honor them in the grave;
Parted from those who loved them dear;
For their country's pride their lives they gave.
(All music rights to these words reserved).

A NATIONS PRAYER

C. Webster, Ilkley - Ilkley Gazette 08/01/1915

Great day of Intercession,
All people hear the call,
Gathered in great assemblies,
Under great dome, St. Paul's.
Strains from great organ pealings,
Great solemnness befall,
Hearts bowed in great submission,
To God, Great Judge of all.

Hear us, in this great hour of need.
In Thy great mercy spare
Our fathers, brothers, sons gone forth.
Oh! hear a nation's prayer.
In this great time of dark distress,
Our cry comes up to Thee;
Defend, protect, by Thy great Power,
Bravo men on land and sea.

Thou canst create, and Thou destroy,
Great giver of all Life;
A just and righteous cause we plead,
Let all men cease from strife.
May Thy great conquest men enthral,
Thy banner be unfurled,
The Christ shall reign, great Kings o'erall,
The nations of the world.

TO THE MOTHERS OF OUR SOLDIERS

I.C. Crabtree, Ilkley - Ilkley Gazette 15/01/1915

Mothers of twenty years ago, my heart is Sad
for you !
My small son is a baby one,
A prattler!-a giver of joy,
Whose coming years 'midst hopes and fears,
My lifetime will employ.

Mothers of twenty years ago, we all do grieve
for you!

As I watch my boy, my great joy
Is tempered with sad thoughts for you.
You cannot live your lives again,
Your sweetest Work to do,
Mothers of twenty years ago, We all are proud
of you!

Your sons have gone, grown men and strong,
To bravely fight the dreaded Hun.
You gave your best!--your land's request
Was not an easy one.
Mothers of twenty years ago, We shall remember
this!

The great price paid!--the work you laid
At the feet of your gallant sons--
Thinking, at home, maybe alone,
Rejoice in this you've done !
Mothers of twenty years ago, our debt is great
to you!

Perhaps you spare, from dread warfare,
Our sons in peaceful years to come,

God grant our prayer-that those you bare
May honoured yet return.

WHEN NIGHT COMES

Ilkley Gazette 25/06/1915

I know a boy who will forget
Most all of what he s told;
How boys should always lift their caps
And Bow to young and old;
'Bout shutting doors; and flies and things;
And scraping off your shoes;
To come right straight in, when it pours;
And sitting still in pews.

He has his pockets full o' stuff
That makes his mother say:
"Oh, Bobby!" just like that, and go
And throw it all away.
And oh, the fearful noise he makes
A-running up and down!
He's pretty sure he's 'bout the worst;
Of any boy in town.

But, after all, his mother comes
And tucks him up in bed,
Where everything is still and dark;

And lots of times she's said,
"I wouldn't change my little lad,
Who's tired as can be,
For any boy in all the land."
That's how she talks to me!

A POEM OF DEATH
Ilkley Gazette 25/02/1916

What of it? Tho' it come swiftly and sure,
Out of the dark womb of fate,
What that a man cannot dare, and endure;
Level heart, steady - eyes straight.

See, all around us the brown crosses mark
Where those who preceded us fell.
What! shall we fear that one leap in the dark
Who have stood the long tension well?

“That leap in the dark.” What follows the leap?
The darkness grown suddenly bright,
Or for ever soft, solemn silence of sleep?
The end - of the birth of new light?

Whichever it is, for this world 'tis good-bye
To brave dreams and hopes barely grown;
Yet 'tis little we'll miss them, so proudly we'll lie

In that wonderful soil, hero-sown.

The fight shall roll o'er us-a broad crimson tide
Feet stamp; shells wail; bullets hiss -
And England be greater, because we have died;
What end could be finer than this?

JOYS OF MUDDLARK CAMP

Ilkley Gazette 14/04/1916

There's an isolated, desolated spot I'd like to mention,
Where all you hear is "Stand at ease," "Quick march," "Slope
arms," "Attention;"

It's miles away from anywhere, by jove it is a rum un,
A man lived there for thirty years, and never saw a woman.

There's only two lamps in the place, so tell it to your mother;
The postman carries No. 1 and the policeman has the other;
So if you want a joy ride, and do not care a jot,
You take a ride upon the car they haven't got.

There's lots of tiny huts, all dotted here and there,
For those who have to sleep inside I've offered many a prayer.
It's mud up to your eyebrows, and you get it in your ears,
But into it you've got to go, without a sign of fear.

There's soldiers living in the huts, it fills my hearts with sorrow,
With tear dimmed eyes they said to me, "It's Mudlark Camp to-
morrow;"

Inside the huts they've rats they say, as big as any goat,
Last night a soldier saw one trying on his overcoat.

For breakfast every morning, it's just like Moth Hubbard,
You double round the hut three times, and dive into the
cupboard;

Sometimes they give you bacon, sometimes they give you cheese,
Which marches up and down your plate, slopes arms, and stands
at ease.

Each night you sleep in straw or boards. just like a herd of cattle,
And if by chance you should turn around, your bones begin to
rattle;

And when you hear "Reveillo" blow, it makes you feel unwell,
You knock the icebergs off your feet, and wish you were in ---
well!

Now when this war is over and we've captured Kiser Billy,
To shoot him would be merciful, but very, very silly,
Just send him down to Mudlark Camp, amongst the rats and clay,
And I'll bet it will not be very long before he fades away.

HEROES OF HOME

OUR SOLDIER POET - Ilkley Gazette 21/04/1916

The boy has gone with his heart aglow
 In an alien land to fight;
The mother who bore him watched him go,
 And her trembling lips were white;
Yet she had bidden him strike his blow
 For his King and the cause of Right.

The boy, in the midst of toil and fight,
 Small time can spare for thought;
The mother who sent him dreams all night
 Of battles he never fought;
And sees him wounded, in desperate plight,
 Or by brutal captors caught.

He takes his hardships as so much sport,
 Being far too busy to whine,
But anxious fears at home distort
 Each peril into nine.
The “crowded hour” is always short,
 ‘Tis waiting hearts that pine.

He fell at last with thousands more –
 Just one of thousands slain –
On a day when the land was drenched with gore,

From Dixmude to the Aisne.
And he lay at peace in a world at war,
And knew not toil nor pain.

The mother who sent him bowed her head,
And wept for the lad she bore;
Yet never she grudged her sacred dead,
For her country's need was sore.
"He died for his King and the Right," she said,
"And no man could do more."

But the sad, proud heart of her inly bled,
Though she showed her grief to none;
She was just one woman who mourned her dead
Out of thousands – one.
But it's better to die when the blood runs red
Than live when hope is done.

A MARCHING SONG

Ilkley Gazette 14/07/1916

"Cast away regret and rue,
Think what you are marching to,
Little live, great pass.
Jesus Christ and Barabbas
Were found the same day.
This died, that went away.

So sing with joyful breath
For why, you are going to death.
Teeming earth will surely store
All the gladness that you pour.

“Earth that never doubts nor fears,
Earth that knows of death, nor tears,
Earth that bore with joyful ease
Hemlock for Socrates,
Earth that blossomed and was glad
‘Neath the cross that Christ had,
Shall rejoice and blossom too
When the bullet reaches you.
Wherefore, men marching
On the road to death, sing!
Pour out gladness on earth’s head,
So be merry, so be dead.”

BOY O’ MINE

J.W.W. - Ilkley Gazette 17/11/1916

I am thinking of you ever,
Boy o’ mine;
Oh! how much I love you,
Boy o’ mine;
Far away though now you be,
Over land and sea,

You still are near to me,
Boy o' mine.

I am waiting very patient,
Boy o' mine;
For the glad time coming,
Boy o' mine;
When as in the old sweet time,
Arms around me you'll entwine,
And kiss your poor old mother.
Boy o' mine.

I'm praying for your coming,
Boy o' mine;
That God will bless and keep you,
Boy o' mine;
Yet I know that many fall,
Who answer duty's call;
But I'm hoping you'll come home,
Boy o'mine.

And should you fall in battle,
Boy o' mine;
I'll try to bear up bravely,
Boy o' mine;
For one thing I shall know,

Though heavy be the blow;
You died a hero's death,
Boy o' mine.

OVERCOMING

C.A.C.- Ilkley, Nov, 15th - Ilkley Gazette 17/01/1916

Oh fathers and mothers, sons and daughters,
And ye little children at school or play;
Keep from your minds the poison hatred,
Fill them with thoughts of love always.

Let us learn to love as the Master taught us,
For love is the healer of hate He told;
Following His ways so pure and gentle,
Strong in His strength with His courage bold.

Bravely to stand for right and justice,
Strong to help up the sad and weak;
Loving those who would try and harm us,
Praying for those who our lives would seek.

This is the message our Master left us,
Love your enemies every one;
Pray for them which despitefully use you,
From dewy morn to the setting sun,

Then must the victory be surely ours,

As the light of our love shines clear and free;
Everlasting, firmly, founded,
Spreading its peace over land and sea.

So fathers and mothers, sons and daughters,
And ye little children at school or play;
Let us fare to the fight with amour on,
Filling our hearts with love always.

REMINISCENCE

M. L. McC - Ilkley Gazette 15/12/1916

'Tis told of Charles Kingsley – gentle soul, -
That as he walked the meadows
Round his home, or wandered midst
Sweet Devon lanes, deep-bedded
In their herbage green, -
And breathed the west wind soft
That blows o'er Lundy's Isle, -
He often felt as though upon the verge
Some happy secret to discover,
That would have opened wide
For him, fresh fields and fairer joys, -
Some secret that he sensed and sought
And fain would find.

So close he felt to God! His gentle soul

Had grasped the meaning of the words
That “God is Love,” and knowing this
Had changed the earth for him.
Could he have learned, as we of later days
Have come to understand, that
God is Mind, and in that Mind
No evil thing can dwell, -
Then had he grasped and kept
And made his own
That which he sensed and sought
And strove to find, -
The happy secret, - which
He surely now has found, and finding,
Evermore is satisfied!

UNITY

*C.A.C. - Ilkley Dec. 14TH, 1916; Ilkley Gazette
22/12/1916*

Citizens true of the world are we;
Brothers and sisters all;
Together we hold the standard aloft,
Together we answer the call.

Courage which springs from an honest hearing,
Can never faint or quail;
Because it is born of kinship with God,

And such courage cannot fail.

So together we stand, nor think of fall,
Though burdens heavy we bear;
Cheerfully helping each other along,
For unity lightens care.

Sharing together the bitter and sweet,
Children in one great home;
We'll watch the sun o're the hilltops shine,
And into the valley come.

Then heavy burdens will melt away,
Fear and sorrow and care;
The harvest of good will surely come,
For faithful hearts to share.

So courage and strength, dear citizens all,
Courage and strength each one;
United to stand in one bright band,
Awaiting the rising sun.

CONSOLATION – M.L. MCC
Christmas, 1916? Ilkley Gazette 22/12/1916

O broken heart!
O weary, wounded, aching sense,

That gropes amid the dark,
And holds out empty hands
Into the void and blank,
Stooping and weeping,
Blinded with agony;
Seeking within the narrow sepulchre
Some sense of him whose loss
Leaves all the world for thee
Disassociate - O broken heart!
Then comes the gentle voice of Lovel :
“Woman, why weepest thou?
Whom seekest thou?
Does thou not know
He is not here –
But rises? ‘Tis because
Thou stoopest to the sepulchre,
And seek it amidst its silent gloom,
That thou art desolate.
Look up and out into God’s Universe,
Where ripening fields
Turn golden towards the sun.
The harvest waits – and labourers are few,
There is great work to do!
Thou shalt grow comfort food,
And solace for thy broken heart!”

THE NEW YEAR

Ilkley Gazette 05/01/1917

No bells in muffled tones proclaim
The Old Year's passing;
On battle fronts to kill and, maim,
The guns are crashing.

No merry peals the New Year's birth,
Proclaim with gladness;
In place of joy and peace on earth,
There's war and sadness.

The Old year dies, unloved, unmourned,
Un bitter wailing;
The year of Victory has dawned,
With Right prevailing.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

Ilkley Gazette 05/01/1917

Good-bye old year, good-bye,
We do not mourn thy loss;
For thou hast given most to bear;
A sad and heavy cross.

Our homes have empty spaces,

Life never more will fill;
Our hearts have aching places,
Which we strive hard to still.

O Lord of Love and Mercy,
Assist us in this hour;
And end the strife that blights our life,
O, hear us ! give us power.

We tremble daily for our boys –
At work, at school, at play –
But more than all for those who fight,
Preserve them Lord we pray.

And now we open wide the door,
And let the new year in;
God grant that war will quickly cease,
The reign of peace begin.

MEMORY

*M.L. McC – Ilkley, Feb. 1st, 1917; Ilkley Gazette
01/02/1917*

Out of the dark and murk of the gloomy street,
I passed into the darker gloom of the murky shop,
Black was the street because of the wandering menace
From some enemy hate that might drop in the town

If discovered by light.

But blacker the shop within, where a flicker dim
In corner remote shone alone 'mid the gloom,
While all around lay a squalor unspeakable;
Pile upon pile of rubbish discarded
From ancient household stock.

Then as I stated my errand brief,
The pallid attendant lifted on high the smoking wick,
And lo! its feeble ray fell upon the scene
That made me all forget the wretched town,
And still more melancholy stare.

For there before me rose the Jungfrau white;
Towering above the Bodeli, where often
I had gazed, with love beside me,
And pure joy within.

'Tis true, no artist hand had limned her majesty
Upon the canvas coarse; a poor daub
It seemed ; yet it sufficed
To bear me back in memory
To happy hours in golden lands.

O mountain mystery of maiden hand!

Thou queen of all the Alpine range ;
What charm is thine; - that thou art able thus
Through years' long span to weave such tender memory
Around thy loveliness?

That one in sorrow and alone could thus
Because of sight of thee – although a travesty –
Forget all else, and joyous, breathe once more
The clear high air of the beloved land.

And midst the sordid murk of air-raid
Threatened town, in gloomy northern clime
For one brief moment live again
In ecstasy!

Thus with this gift, - this rare sweet gift,
Of memory and its joys;
Of memory, and its tender love that never fails,
We surely can surmount
All grief and gloom, - and as
The wondrous Jungfrau rises from her clouds of mist.
We too can rise above our fears and woes,
And reach the high clear atmosphere
Of mental Alpine range!

TRINITY IN UNITY

M.L. McC - Ilkley Gazette 02/03/1917

A trefoil grew on Irish soil,
With leaflets, one, two, three;
And the Saint a gentle lesson taught
To doubting hearts that questioned him.

“Three in One, and One in Three, -
Master, how can these things be?”
Stooping, he gathered the trefoil small,
Counted its leaflets as they grew, -
“Three leaves you see, my children, here,
Each one distinct as a sphere,
Yet each but part of a larger plan
Forming into a perfect whole.

Each leaf apart, and yet akin
To the other three, so together they form
In all, a three-leaved clover.

Life, Truth and love the trefoil make,
God’s Trinity in unity, -
Three in One, and One in Three,
That is how it comes to be!”

WORK

M. L. McC - Ilkley Gazette 09/03/1917

Unto each one of us is given
In the Vineyard of the Lord,
A little plot to care
And cultivate.

Wherein it is our pleasant task
Throughout the day
To weeds and plant
To prune and propagate.

Both wisdom and experience come
Swift to our aid, and show
Us how our work to do,
With bright activity and happy song.

Each one intent upon
His own allotted task,
Not murmuring or loitering
Or gazing past our own, into
Our neighbours' lots to mark
How they progress.

But eager and alert, each one,
His weeds to gather and burn,

His tender vines to dress
And train, his grapes to garner, -
And at last to earn
The welcome guerdon
At sunset hour:
“Well done, O servant mine!
For thou hast proved,
Patient and faithful
Through the heat and burden
Of Life’s day.
Now enter thou
Into the joy
Of work fulfilled,
The rest which those have won
Who labour well within
The Vineyard of their Lord!”

THE PROMISED LAND

M.L. McC - Ilkley Gazette 16/03/1917

As Western prairies rise
From mighty Mississippi’s brink
So imperceptibly,
The traveller does not realise
What the heights he gains, until
Far off upon the horizon’s
Utmost edge at last he sees

As in a dream, a tiny cloud
Arise, which grows before his gaze
Into a snowcapped peak, and
Thus he leans that e'er
He even reaches mountain range
He has achieved height
Of many thousand feet,
And suddenly there lies
Before his eyes, all golden
In the Sun, chain upon chain
Of mighty peaks, until unfolds
His goal – his promised land.

So in our journey through Life's
Pilgrimage, from sense of Soul
From out Egyptian darkness
Into promised light,
We must at first traverse
The wilderness of doubt and fear,
Wherein at times it seems
We scarcely any progress make
But nightfall finds us still
Upon the level plains, as though
We had but pitched our tent
Where yesternight our camp
Fire glowed; and yet we know

That we have marched throughout
The livelong day across
The arid sands, and must
Perforce some progress sure have made
So verily, if we but faith and courage
Keep, we shall emerge
At last upon the heights, and see
The wondrous glories of
The promised Land.
Where nevermore can
Slavery of Egypt snare, nor
Drought of desert daunt,
But we shall dwell secure
At peace, aloft upon
God's mountain peaks!

VIMY RIDGE

Ilkley Gazette 27/07/1917

‘Twas Easter Monday, nineteen seventeen,
When nature was touching the hedges green,
That the lads of the British Army won
A battle with bayonet, mortar and gun.

The scene was one that memory grips,
More than a story told with the lips,
Yes, it was splendid, and yet sad,

For some mothers lost their only lad.

A week before the great advance,
Big guns had led the Boche a dance;
The mortars too did their work well,
Tearing up trench with piercing shell.

To look across the enemy's line,
The sight was awful, and yet fine,
Great clouds of earth rose in the air,
And shells did boom, and rip and tear.

The heavy guns settled down at length,
And we knew it was now a trial of strength;
Our thoughts went out to the lads in front,
Who now would have to bear the burst.

The barrage begins with sudden roar,
As shells from our eighteen pounders pour,
Then over the top our brave lads leap,
And steadily forward begin to creep.

The curtain of fire then forward glides,
And star shells gleam from many sides;
Machine gun bullets whistle around,
And brave men's blood drips to the ground.

How the battle was won, I cannot say,
But I know that there was a price to pay;
Many a life was given that morn,
And for mothers and wives new sorrow was born.

The sights I beheld as I looked at the scene,
Where that cruel and deadly struggle had been,
Were sufficient to make a hardened man think,
As he gazed upon those who had passed the brink.

A victory was won, oh yes! that is true,
And our lads had fought, in the way Britons do;
Their courage was grand, their valour sublime,
And the work they did will live through all the time.

Ah! life is sweet while it does last,
But at its heat it may soon pass;
For on that day many crossed the bridge,
And reached their Heaven – via Vimy Ridge.

ROLL CALL E.G.M.

M. L. McC - Oct 6th, 1917; Ilkley Gazette 05/10/1917

A year ago you gave your brave young life
For England.
You did not go because you felt a boy's

Mere love of the unknown.
To manhood's gravity, with cares of home,
You had attained,
And wife and little child you left behind
For England.
You were but one of many who at the
Nation's call laid down,
With grave and willing hearts, their earthly all
For England.
Fair France is full of lonely crosses set
In memory of those who thus
For freedom fell.
But this we know : There never was a cross
Without a crown;
And when the Roll is called of those who shine
Resplendent through unselfishness,
How proud we are to give your name – our son –
Who through the cross has helped to win the crown
For England!

THE VALIANT DEAD

*J.W. Walker - Ilkley, Nov. 8, 1917; Ilkley Gazette
09/11/1917*

Mourn not for those who nobly live and fall
In a just cause – who battle for the right;
Though death be swifter than an arrow's flight,

No earth-born fetters now their souls enthal.
Yonder may lie in sleep their mortal all,
And still above their heads foes wage the fight;
Free, their glad spirits pass beyond death's night,
Into their Maker's presence – at his call.

They are not dead; though death the door may close
‘Tween them and us, and we on earth no more
Grasp them by the hand, or feel their fond embrace;
For in that land which nought of sorrow knows –
Those whom we love and miss, and long for sore,
We once again shall welcome face to face.

A HOLIDAY AT ILKLEY

T. OTTY - Sootbill, Batley; Ilkley Gazette 06/09/1918

Ilkley, sweet Ilkley, gem of the North,
Who can appraise thy beauty and worth?
Nesting serenely, ‘neath heather-clad hills,
Whose waters descend by torrents and rills.

Bordered by bowers, groves, and rich woods,
Round about which Wharfe pours his floods,
Here may be found sweet vistas galore,
On river's brink or from the moor.

What affluent verdure, what wealth of green,

Is everywhere dominant in the bright scene;
What charming witchery displayed by the trees,
When gracefully bending, swayed by the breeze.

Seated or stood on Rombold's rough height,
A scene enchanting unfolds on the sight;
Where the brown river rolls at your feet,
Makes up a picture inexpressibly sweet.

What large assets of health germs hast thou,
On whom all and sundry thou wilt bestow;
The tired town dweller may recuperate here,
And lay in stock of healthy good cheer.

The sick and the ailing, roaming thy slopes,
Shed their despair and revive drooping hopes;
For thy beauties and charms seldom quite fail
To cheer and bless those who visit Wharfedale.

Pity the man, who up at "White Wells,"
Viewing the landscape, whose heart ne'er swells,
With gratitude, that it has been his lot,
To stand and survey the beautiful spot.

Adieu, glorious scene, we no longer may stay,
Life's stern duties now call us away;

If Providence is kind, then it may be
Thy beauties and glories again may see.

REMEMBRANCE

Ilkley Gazette 05/11/1926

*Armistice Day November 11 th 1918 by Jack Scott
Queen's Head Inn, Burley in Wharfedale*

Another year has passed
And comes the day
When all should bend the knee
And humbly pray
That God will bless and guard
Each sleeping bed
Of those who loved and lost
Our Mighty Dead.

They answered to the call
Nor questioned why
Sacred to the oath they took
To do or die
Freely they offered then
Their all to give
And till the trumpet sounds
Their deeds shall live.

Speak of the fame they won

With tearful pride
Tell how unflinchingly
They bled and died
Theirs was a sacrifice
Of powerless worth
God grant the gift prove
A new world's worth.

HOLIDAYS AT ILKLEY *A.H. Trout, 1916*

In Ilkley fine some time we spent,
In wooing health and sweet content
The Cow and Calf, the Wells so white,
The Hebers Ghyll we enjoyed quite.
The Beacon high, the Fairy Dell,
The river Wharfe, we know quite well;
And Bolton Woods with Steps so straight,
And Strid so narrow, were just right.

The Picture Hall, the library too,
The wounded, with their suits of blue,
The hilly drive, the churches' story,
Had each their interest and their glory.
At Grassington and Skipton too,
A little time we spent to view;
But Harrogate, alas to say,

The rain came down and spoilt the day.

The Panorama Rock I went one morn,
And Rombald's Moor, where grows no corn;
The view was fine the air was fresh,
All nature was in lovely dress.

A.H. Trout, 1917

Again we've been to Ilkley town
The Hebers Ghyll to view,
And other places now set down,
With friends to welcome too.
Ben Rhydding Hydro, first we spied,
As in the train we rode,
And other Hydros on the side
Of hills and moorlands broad.

The White Wells and Parish Ghyll,
We paid them both a call;
Whilst over on the other hill,
We saw the Myddleton Hall.
The river Wharfe still runs along
The valley, 'tween the hills,
And on its banks, the trees among,
We saw the Addingham Mills.

The Panorama we enjoyed
From top of rocks so steep;
The Picture Hall our sight employed,
Before we went to sleep.
To come again gave great delight;
We go home with regret,
Arriving there, we trust, alright,
Before the sun has set.

IN MEMORY TO THE FALLEN 1914 – 1918

*By Mr E.P. Schofield of Ilkley who died in February
1920 - Ilkley Gazette 17/09/1933*

Leave him to rest!
Midst the summers warmth and the winters frosts
Beneath the shell-bespattered fields of war
And remnants of his last campaign
Leave him to rest.

Leave him to rest!
No troubles now disturb his breast
His body buried 'neath the ground, his soul at peace
And is with God
Although the homeland mourns him in her grief
Leave him to rest.

Leave him to rest!
Beneath the Flanders battlefields
Where guns have ceased their deadly fire
And swords are sheathed
And Wars grim horrors now are over
Leave him to rest.

Leave him to rest!
Amidst the scenes of earthy strifes;
His life laid down so nobly, at his country's call
And freedom of his Empire home
Leave him to rest.

Leave him to rest!
In God's great love and care;
For through the mystic 'Veil' his soul has passed
Life honours now adorn his brow
Have him to rest.

THE ILKLEY WAR MEMORIAL

*By a former resident Joseph Dawson – Ilkley Gazette
15/9/1922*

How clearly I remember
Encroaching on the Grove
A rough disfigured corner
Where fowls were wont to rove.

How clearly I remember
What grasses coarse spread there
Yet for its lack of beauty
No mortal seemed to care.

How year by year, uncomely
A loveless waste it lay
Harsh eyesore to the garden
That bloomed over the way.

But now a stately tribute
Has rescued it from shame
And grief and pride gaze fondly
On every sculptured name.

Of those who in their manhood
Laid all but honour by
And for the love of country
Went bravely forth and died.

All loyal hearts count proudly
The glorious part they played
When such deeds are discounted
Let England be afraid.

A NEW YEAR'S WISH

Tom Hardisty

The trees are standing in the fields
Like spectres, tall and grim,
The leaves lie withered at their feet
In sympathy with Him
Who, looking down in a shining crown,
Sees a world of strife, and sin.

In every peaceful village,
Our lads are dressed in khaki,
In blue or modest brown.
On many a distant headland,
On many a foreign shore,
Is heard the groans of the dying
Amid the cannons roar.

In many a humble cottage,
In many a stately hall,
The tears are gently falling,
For those beyond recall.
In many a cellar dwelling,
The poor, and very old,
Now dread the coming of the winter,
The darkness and the cold.

Oh God, in Thy tender mercy,
Who made us all akin,
Rid the world of this savage warfare,
And make us more like Him
Who from above, in His wonderful love,
Can Cleanse the world from sin.

AFTER NEUVE CHAPELLE – ROLL CALL

The charge it was ended;
The Battle was won,
Some girl lost a sweetheart;
Some mother a son,
Sadly we heard of a comrade who fell,
For the honour of England,
At the fight of Neuve Chapelle.

There's honour been won
In that glorious light,
There's lads who have died,
For the cause of the right,
Twas a price to be paid, and the Germans knew well,
For the cold blood they shed,
At the fight of Neuve Chapelle.

We fell in for the roll call,
At the close of the fight;

And some of us there
Made a piteous sight.
Some never answered, so well knew quite well
That they had fallen like heroes,
In the fight of Neuve Chapelle.

Some homes will be lonely,
Some mother's heart sad;
Some lass will be weeping,
For her soldier lad,
Who died in the battle for his country
he fell,
Defending his home
At the fight of Neuve Chapelle.

WORLD WAR II

“THE WARDEN”

By S.A.C. - Ilkley Gazette 20/10/1939

As fades the twilight from the autumn sky,
 Upon my bed awhile to rest I lie,
Ere tolls the knell of the day – the midnight hour –
From yonder clock within the Town Hall tower.
For then I must prepare to rise with speed,
 Once more the call of duty stern to heed.

Meanwhile the hours pass all too swift by,
 As fitful slumber’s soothing balm I try
To snatch within my chamber’s fast-close door;
Yet seem the household sounds to irk the more
While from without the noises of the street
 Disturb my rest and wakefully compete.

So soon I needs must rise – like midnight ghost –
 To keep my tryst at the appointed post;
Groping my lonely way in stygian gloom
 To hold nocturnal; vigil in that room
Where my companion wardens with me wait
 Alert for air-raid warnings, soon or late.

The still small hours pass wearily and slow
Until, to greet the dawn, is heard the crow

Of Chanticleer whose clarion call so shrill
Is herald of the clamorous sounds that fill
The air – more welcome than the sirens wail –
Another day of work – and war – to bail.

ISLANDS OF THE SEA

M.L. McC – Ilkley Gazette 10/11/1939
November 11, 1918 ; November 11, 1939.

Loved islands of the sea !
So small – their cliffs indent
By storms age-long – their hills
Enshrouded by the mists wind borne
From sweep of surging surf
Flung on a lone shore
While in the Book we love
These promises stand sure:
“The isles shall wait on Me
And on My arm shall trust.
Let Earth rejoice – let multitudes
of isles be glad thereof!”

Wherefore lift up our thought
And see these islands of our home
Secure, serene, surrounded
By the ocean of Love’s law,
Undaunted, unafraid, because

All those who dwell therein
Well know His promises are kept,
Who in the ages past and now again
Protects and safely keeps
His children, who in calm await
Fulfilment of His purpose by
Blessed islands of the sea!

RESOLUTION

G. Peters – Ilkley Gazette 02/02/1940

We pledged our Faith with those who died
For freedom of mankind which was assailed
Fathers and sons their youth they sacrificed
Faced life, unflinching, met death unafraid.

To us they left the burning torch of trust
Which we shall scared guard relentlessly
And follow in their steps, to destroy lust
Of Tyranny and Power; to keep our Empire free.

Never doubt, nor shun the roughest way,
Keeping, as they, our faith with cheerful song,
Learn from their courage, though our burdens lay
Heavy; facing each day unswerving strong.

No sacrifice too high – no task too low,

No ease of comfort, but ourselves deny
Seeking with ever more crushing blow
To rid, once more, the world from infamy.

Which from Inferno's depth like Pestilence
Stalks through the Earth and leaves but death behind;
Whose fiendish fury tramples weak defence
Of those its victims – suppliants to mankind.

Loyal are we to King and Empire's need
Our souls to God – our bodies to defend
That Liberty of which our Empire's creed
Hath blazed the world its trail from end to end.

Nor shall it e'er be vanquished. Firm we stand,
Eager to follow where our Fathers led,
At theirs and their Grand Sires, for Motherland
We will keep Faith unbroken with our Dead.

“IF” (After Rudyard Kipling)

*By the Group Secretary in an Aircraft Works – Ilkley
Gazette 09/05/1940*

If you can join the Group whilst fellow workers
Are hanging back and leaving it to you?
If you can pay your sub, and show the shirkers
You're out to beat “Old Nasty” and his crew –

If you can urge them to the resolution
To sign the form and undertake their share –
If you can raise your weekly contribution,
Another sixpence here, a sixpence there –

If you can watch your savings ever growing
With more Certificates at fifteen bob,
And watching them, can feel a pride at knowing
They go to help Old England do her job –

If you can keep your Book and all that's in it.
Nor seek repayment till the fight is won,
PEACE SHALL BE YOURS, FOR YOU
WILL HELP WIN IT
And what is more, I know you CAN, my son!

THAT BACK SEAT

By Kate Stevens – Ilkley Gazette 23/05/1940

So often the back seat is empty
As smugly you speed on your way,
While we workers stand patiently waiting
For a lift at the end of the day.

And oh ! if the bus comes up loaded
We wilt like water starved flower

To hear the conductress say “Full oop –
Another one, luv, in an hour.”

While not taking much of your petrol
To pull up and then restart,
It would show that you had the right “spirit.”
And not only a head but a heart.

So often the back seat is empty.
Don’t let this be said of your car.
What’s that? You will fill up in future.
Oh, thanks! A real sport – yes, you are!

HOPES PERSPECTIVE

P.T.A. – Ilkley Gazette 12/12/1940

Viewed in the setting of mere days and years
War, world-wide, bloody – well might seem to be
An irremediable catastrophe,
Fraught with an agony of blood and tears,
Wherein its hateful head red ruin rears –
The blank negation and insolvency
Of progress and enlightened Liberty.

With all that Life to thoughtful minds endears,
But to the vision of mature scope
Th’ Eternal Purpose, steadfast aye, and sure

Is through the Ages evermore made known
Bright looms the future of the Race with hope,
Wars but a childish ailment Time shall cure
The Health of Manhood shall for all atone.

THE ROYAL NAVY WANTS A “SUB”

Ilkley Gazette 27/03/1942

Ilkley people may be proud,
Of all the efforts they have made.
For social welfare, savings weeks,
The people have so proudly paid.

The Merchant Navy brings our food,
In spite of raiders manned by “huns.”

The seas can only be kept free
By Britain’s Navy, ships and guns.

The Royal Navy sends a call,
“Give us the tools to beat the foe.”
And, once more, all of us will vie,
To keep all patriot hearts aglow.

Half a million pounds we need,
A lot of cash these hard days;
But still we’ll give until it hurts,
Rememb’ring he whose life he pays.

And when this tragedy is o'er,
And peace reigns o'er this lovely dale,
We'll count the cost, and proudly say,
"The folk of Ilkley did not fail."

THE SWEETEST SMELL

By E.J.A.G - Ilkley Gazette 10/04/1942

Of many scents have poets sung;
Of myrrh, and incense, and of musk;
The fragrance of a rose at dusk,
The smell of new mown hay and tang of sea.
But what's the loveliest scent to me,
With which none other can compare,
Is the smell of washing that's been hung
Out in the open air,

When I'm home on leave, and smell that scent,
I know I'm home; and great content
Is in my heart. And when at night
I go to bed, switch off the light,
And lay my head on pillow soft,
I sniff fragrance rare; and oft
Declare, that town-washed sheets cannot compare
With those hung out in country air.

PEACE

The Hawk – Ilkley Gazette 24/04/1942

Splendid the cities stand,
The lordly cities of Earth;
Glorious, great and grand.
But the joys of the cities to me
Are tasteless, insipid and stale,
So I'll go where the wind blows free,
On the hill overlooking the dale,
Yes! I'll go to a hill that I know,
Where the circling curlews fly;
And look down on the village below,
Where the Wharfe goes winding by.

In the heather that crowns the hill,
Peace, I know, I shall find;
In the moorland, silent and still,
Where the wandering sheep-tracks wind;
There's peace in the moorland brown,
By the tracks so seldom trod;
The pride of man-made the town,
The country was made by God.

THE PIKE

By T.I.M. – *Ilkley Gazette* 08/05/1942

If Victory for us only folly can rob,
Said Churchill into the “Mike”;
Ponder on that when you meet on the road
A Home Guard sporting a pike.

The pike has its uses, by the way,
Every Home Guard must eat to win;
His rations are usually bully beef,
Issued to him in a tin.

An opener is always hard to find,
A chopper, a knife, or it’s like;
But he can put the tin below his heel,
And batter the thing with his pike.

Victory, at last, is mine, he cried,
But the bully beef fell in the mud;
He gazed at the beef, with a frown on his brow,
And cursing he murmured “dud.”

He tightened his belt and went on his way,
Wielding his well-worn pike;
He was fed to the teeth, but didn’t lose hope,
For he still had his weapon – a pike.

CALLING ALL DALESMEN

By 'The Hawk'. – *Ilkley Gazette* 15/05/1942

A wild wind blew across the Dale,
A rattling, roaring, gallant gale,
That swept along the heathery floor,
And ghylls and glens of Snowdon Moor.
With shouts of laughter, high and shrill,
Away it danced a-down the hill,
Skimmed the surface of the River,
And set the timid reeds a-shiver.
Then, like an eagle swooping down,
Sped through the streets of Otley town,
On again with giant stride,
To shake the trees on Chevin side,
And on and on – no stay nor stop,
Up and over Chevin top,
Across the fields of stubble bare,
Down into the vale of the Aire,
The merry dance yet onward goes,
And circles round the hill at Wrose,
At Queensbury to scale the height.
And disappear into the night,

It blew into another land,
Of desert waste, of burning sand,
And in that aching desert bare,

It found a lad from Yorkshire there,
Unto whose ear the dying gale,
Brought a greeting from his Dale.

THE LAST LINE

By 'The Hawk'. – *Ilkley Gazette* 26/06/1942

There's an army that bears no banner,
Whose warfare never will cease,
Who fight in the age-old manner,
Using the weapons of Peace.

Down the sodden fallow,
Breaking the stubborn earth,
Or winning the hay,
In the heat of the day,
(That proves what a fellow is worth);
Reaping and storing the harvest
Won by his painful toil-
There's a man that is fighting for England,
The fellow who tills the soil.

Up on the rolling moorland,
High on the windy hill,
'Neath a spreading sky,
Where the curlews fly.
And plovers are calling shrill;
Out in all sorts of weather,

Faithful his watch to keep –
There's a man that is fighting for England,
The fellow that tends the sheep.

There's an army that marches unheeded,
Who boast of no victories won,
But they do the job that is needed,
And see that's its jolly well done.

WARMONGERS

By P.T.A. – Ilkley Gazette 03/07/1942

Strange World! – where tyrants daily prate of Peace,
And self-appointed patrons wars prepare;
Where peace assumes at will a martial air
And the fierce warrior wears the unwanted fleece
Of bleating meekness, feigning wars shall cease
When swords and ploughshares the same likeness beat,
And cannons wreaths of olive-branches wear,
Roaring their promise of a world's release.

Strange World, indeed! – that madly can believe
Mere change of names can real change express,
Make madness reason – truth the child of lies,
Brute force true manhood – and can still conceive
A righteous God can e'er be otherwise,
Or fail, at last, to punish wickedness!

NATIONAL PRAYER

(A Sonnet)

By P.T.A. – Ilkley Gazette 04/09/1942

Much the effectual fervent prayers prevail
Of righteous men, but let us not suppose
That righteousness, unaided, ever grows
By self-sufficing efforts – all must fail,
Since they refuse to own the sorry tale
Of man's corruption – hence full bitter woes
Must scourge him, till the cleaning power he knows
Of pardon; failing which, no prayers avail.

E'en so with nations, righteousness alone
Can win divine approval, when they pray.
For, not till peoples with contrition own
Their sin, and seek forgiveness, and obey
The laws of God, can prayer effectual be,
To compass Peace and lasting Liberty.

A WHARFEDALE MEMORY

“The Hawk” – Ilkley Gazette 04/12/1942

There's a Witch that lives in Wharfedale,
And a mighty Witch is she,
For her magic powers range both far and wide,
Her spell lies on all Dalesmen,

Wherever they may be,
And she calls them and she will not be denied.

For suddenly you'll find,
There will rise within your mind,
A picture that you haven't seen for years,
Of some place that once you knew –
That's the Witch that's calling you;
Though the picture is half-hidden by your tears.

And the Witch that lives in Wharfedale,
Is working spells today,
For her magic reaches out beyond the sea,
To Northward or to Southward,
Or to Eastward far away,
To our Service Men a mighty Witch is she.

GAIN BY LOSS

By P.T.A. – Ilkley Gazette 19/03/1943

To the bough, where sweetly sing
Spring's glad heralds, carolling,
Autumn's withered leaves still cling,
On the verge of Spring.

Like ghosts of mem'ry, still
Lingering, loth to vanish 'till

Cometh after Winter's chill,
Springtide's quick'ning thrill,

Opening leafy buds, that now,
Messengers of hope, avow
Soon shall wealth of green endow
Joyous branch and bough.

Autumn seemed calamity,
Fraught with bitter loss to thee,
Spring's enrichment yet shall be
Recompense, O tree!

Is there then no lesson here?
No glad measure of good cheer,
To mournful heart – in fear
Of bereavement drear?

Yes ! a prophecy of gain
Is they Autumn-loss, its pain
Blest assurance doth contain
That thy Spring shall reign.

FOOTPATHS

By 'The Hawk'. – Ilkley Gazette 02/04/1943

Fine, firm roads the Romans made,

Straight they ran on dale and hill,
Well and truly they were laid.
As witness, they are standing still.

But ere the Romans landed,
The Ancient British man,
Made the moorland footpaths,
The twisting, turning, footpaths,
The funny, friendly footpaths,
That through the heather ran.

Upon the roads the motors run,
And heavy lorries thunder by,
So that is why the road I shun,
And to quiet footpaths fly.

In perfect peace we wander,
My faithful dog and I,
Along the winding footpaths,
The ancient, ambling footpaths –
Until we find the footpath
That leads beyond the sky.

WINGS FOR VICTORY

By "*The Hawk*" – *Ilkley Gazette* 21/05/1943

The quarrel was not of our seeking,
We harboured no hate for these foe,
No menace lay hid in our speaking,
We gathered no force for the blow.

So at night when the death started raining
From the skies where the raider-planes flew,
Then we found that our hopes lay remaining
In the hands and hearts of a few.

And the few – as so oft in our story,
Have saved us from ruin again,
No doubt ye will give them their glory;
Nor make not their sacrifice vain!

Will ye be slow at the learning
Of the lessons adversity brings?
Will ye wait till your roof-tree is burning
To know that the Lion needs Wings?

A STRONGER THAN HERCULES

By P.T.A. – Ilkley Gazette 21/05/1943

Mighty Hercules, of yore,
Godlike strength, personified,
Seemed to mortals, more and more,
As he wandered far and wide

Lab'ring almost past believing,
Yet, the while an exile, grieving
For dear wife and home denied.

Great achievements, such as these,
Seem to each succeeding age
More than stories just to please,
More than fancy's heritage.
But the tale of strife unending
Man with Destiny contending
Vainly 'gainst her stern decrees.

The Nemean, lion he slew.
Cleansed th' Augean stableries,
But one thing he could not do.
Could not any means devise
To prevent mankind from sinning,
Banish evil's first beginning,
Of the springs of thought renew.

So, a mightier Hero far
Unto this sad, wearied Earth
Came, preceded by a Star,
Passed the gates of human birth,
Anguish of the Cross enduring,
Thus, 'twixt Earth and Heaven insuring

Henceforth, no fixed, fated, bar.

TO OUR ENERGETIC WOMEN

By A.B. – Ilkley Gazette 18/06/1943

(A mere man's appeal after reading an account of the startling programme of post-war bustle proposed by the Ben Rhydding Townswomen's Guild).

Ladies, I fear an alarming proclivity
Shows in your Townswomen's Guild;
You paint such a scene of remorseless activity
That with dismay I am filled.

To plan the new houses, to sit on committees, and
Other things that you design,
May warm the heart of a good woman citizen,
But bring misgiving to mine.

You, in particular, cherished divinity
(Wife of my bosom, I mean)
Are you involved in this bold femininity?
Are you to be restless, my queen?

I hoped on discarding equipment and battle dress
Peace and contentment would reign:
People would all settle down and would prattle less,
Live and let live once again.

I looked for the joys of restored domesticity,
Comfort and fire and light;
Minus the need to conserve electricity,
And compulsory going out at night.
What shall we do when you're regimenting us,
Busily moulding our lives,
And, incidentally, basely preventing us
Having the joy of our wives?

Snug by the hearth I would
Rather, by far, be here,
You're busy darning my socks,
Glad to be playing your Joan to my Darby, dear,
Planning your next summer frocks.

THE SONG OF THE BOMBERS

By C for Charlie – 25/06/1943

We leave the eagles far below
As we climb to the cloudless height;
Then straight as an arrow to its mark
We steer by the polestar's light.
Anywhere under the sun,
For we are the Chariots of the Sky
Out to strafe the Hun.

Our signature tune is heard afar
As over the coast we race;
And even the siren's mournful wail
Is drowned in our thrumming bass.
Look at the lovely two-ton bombs
We'll drop when we make our run,
For we are the Chariots of the Sky
Out to strafe the Hun.

We'll send an ever-increasing load
On factory, store, and dock.
'Till every city within our reach,
Shall reel beneath the shock.
We'll treble the dose he gave to us,
Then he'll wish he'd never begun.
For we are the Chariots of the Sky
Out to strafe the Hun.

THE CHAIN

By *'The Hawk'* – 06/08/1943

Did you ever walk by Washburn in the summer?
Have you seen the sun go down from Sword Point Hill?
At the closing of the day
Have you watched the water's play
By the bridge that spans the stream below the mill?

D'ye know the hills the other side of Wharfedale?
The lofty crags that seem to sweep the sky?
Where the mighty moors sweep down
In a sea of green and brown:
Have you heard the lonely curlew's wailing cry?

That's the magic of the Dales – and when you've known it.
You can wander through the world both far and wide;
But you'll find there is a chain
That will draw you back again,
For the Dalesland holds your heart ever tied.

HOME ON LEAVE

By M.L. McC – 19/11/1943

I slept, I dreamed.
And in my dream I saw
A great white bird with out-stretched wings
Fly swift across the sea,
Come straight to me.

It was so pure and white
It seemed an Angel Vision
More than a bird. Then I awoke
And as I wondered what the message meant
The morning broke. Then quick the answer came:
“Have landed British Port.

Am coming home on Leave.”

And then I understood.

Oh blessed Bird with wings out-spread

Foreshadowing Peace; -

Oh dear and valiant Son, -

Love guards you – Welcome Home!

WHARFEDALE

By *'The Hawk'* – 04/02/1944

In Winter, in summer, in sunshine or rain,

'Tis a glorious thing to see Wharfedale again.

As I look from the Chevin my whole being thrills,

At the sight of the river, the moors and the hills.

How many a wandering sould would be fain,

Just to be back in dear Wharfedale again.

Almscliff and Snowdon and Beamsley look down

On farmstead and village and neat little town.

On ploughland and meadow and pasturage green,

And sweet silver river a-winding in between.

You'll search the world round, but you'll search it in vain.

Ere you find such a place as dear Wharfedale again.

Up through the hill-land the dale winds away,

By Bolton and Barden and Burnsall to Cray.

By Kettlewell, too, 'tis a grand little spot,
And Gerston and Threshfield (the best of the lot),
Talk as you like of your "Castles in Spain"
But just let me stay in dear Wharfedale again.

A CANDLE

By M.L. McC – 25/02/1944

Light a candle in the darkness,
Feeble though its flame may be.
It will light some weary traveller
Safely home to rest and peace.

Long ago a Chinese Thinker
Left a saying full of might:
Better far to light a candle
In the darkness than stand idle
Cursing darkness in your heart.

Recently in Arizona
A lone Trapper found a cavern
Vast beyond all human reckoning,
Mightiest yet unearthed to sight.
Quite undaunted with a lantern
Fearlessly he ventured in
And kept silence
Awestruck by Immensity,

Till the story grew, and rumours
Reached a band of pioneers.

They ran in electric cable, -
All bewildered, scarce believing
Saw what eyes had never seen.
Domes that far eclipsed St. Peter's
Palaces no Rajah ever reared.
Miles on miles of regal splendour,
Falling into depths abysmal.
For no end has yet been found.

But it was a lighted candle
In an old and timeworn lantern
That disclosed to waiting millions
This vast marvel of the world.
Therefore do not fear your candle
Can eclipsed by darkness be.
Never blackness how'er fearsome
Can extinguish living light.
Magna Carta was a candle.
Atlantic Charter now Electric Light!

Chinese Saying: It is better to light a candle in the darkness than
it is to curse the darkness.

CHINS UP ON THE CHIN

Salute the soldier – 06/04/1944

The Sergeant comes from Peckham
And the Corporal comes from Perth
We're up here on the Chin Hills
Right on top of all the earth.
There are coloured mountains round us
And coloured jungles too
If this was just a holiday – t'would be a lovely view.

But the Jap is in the jungle
And you can't admire the scene
When you're dressed in moss and fungus
And your face is painted green
And you're soaked like Monday's washing
In the roaring monsoon rain
And the leeches and mosquitoes play at cut and come again.

No, it isn't very funny
On this road to Mandalay –
But with reg'lar grub and letters
We can stick it all the way.
The Jap has got it coming soon,
We'll smash his ugly grin,
So don't you worry, Mum and Dad – it's chins up on the Chin.

THE FAG

Salute the soldier – 21/04/1944

'Twas as black as your hat when we landed;
We silenced those posts to a man,
Then a dog started barking – the rockets went up –
And that's when the party began.

We busted his radio station,
The Major's lot smashed his H.Q.
Then his ammo went up – and boy, what a roar!
Then I stopped one – and then we withdrew.

I was done for if Bill hadn't found me
And poulticed me up with this rag;
I wouldn't have missed it for thousands!
And now – well, thank God for a fag.

DETOUR

By M.L. McC- 28/04/1944

As we journey on life's pathway,
Leading upward all the way,
Suddenly we seem confronted
With a question yet unknown.
We have seemed to live like Children
In a sort of Happy Land,

And when first we meet a problem
Startled, frightened our one impulse
Seems to be to run away.

So we turn into a by-path,
Thinking it a short detour,
But it leads us into waste land,
Desolate and drear and wild.
Here we find awakening travellers
Who are seeking to escape,
And we humbly ask for guidance,
Seek our homeward way to find.

For the longest detour turning
Leads at last back to the track,
And once more our feet are treading
On the, firm and narrow path,
Camouflage can be detected,
It is only counterfeit,
Just one truthful honest challenge
And it crumbles at our feet.

When we see some darkness falling
To obscure the path we tread,
See it only as a shadow,
Go right through it to the end.

For the end is always gladness
When we walk into the light!

OLD ENGLAND

By 'The Hawk' – 22/09/1945

Old England still is living,
Though hidden far from view,
The England of the olden days,
The Ancient Land of footpath ways,
Old England that forever stays
Loved by the Faithful Few.

The laws that rule Old England,
No Government drew up,
But Ancient Custom, true and tried,
And legend of the countryside
For which our fathers fought and died
And with which we grew up.

Would you seek Old England?
It is enchanted ground
The leave the city streets behind
And go out with a care-free mind
By lane and by-way, and you'll find
Old England all around.

THE HARBINGER OF SPRING

By P.T.A.— 02/03/1945

Pale Snowdrop, firstling of the year,
Oncoming Spring's meek harbinger,
 The advent seems to me;
 Is then thy pallor but the hue,
Of Winter's death, or Springtide's new
 White robe of infancy?

The insubstantial presence now,
The whiteness of thy modest brow.
 Thy meekly-drooping head
 Are like the first responsive sigh.
Of Earth, beneath the kindling sky,
 New-rising from the dead.

Or, art thou, then, some spirit-child
Three standing, harmless, undefiled,
 And from all grossness free
 Of Earth thou art, yet not of earth,
Some other World hath given at birth,
 That whiteness unto thee.

As snowflakes, quickly melt away,
 Thy beauty scarcely lasts a day,
 Any yet we surely know,

Life, that to thee so gently came.
Shall yet with subtly-kindling flame
Make all the gardens glow.