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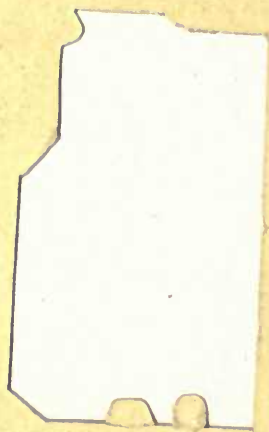
ST. JULIEN
LANGEMARCK

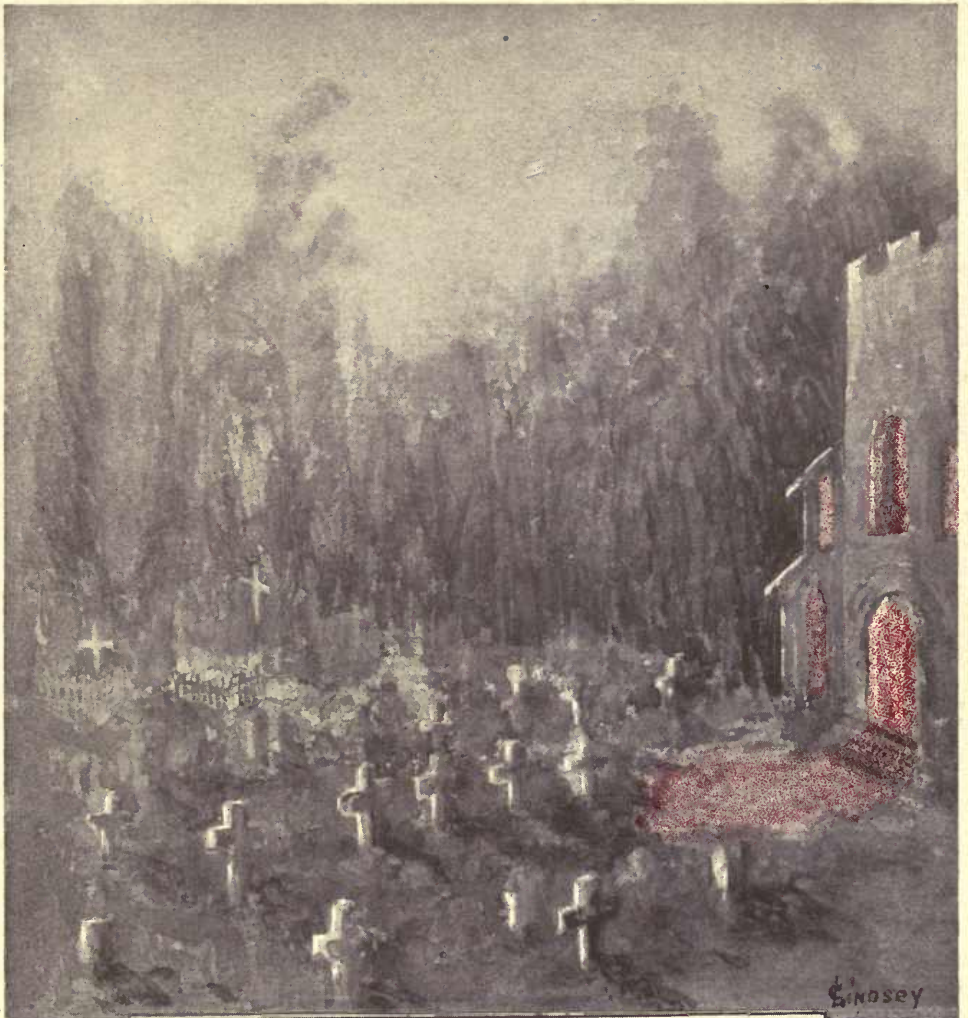


Songs
Of Our Maple
Saplings

BY ANNIE BETHUNE MCDUGALD







SINSEY

To those who "leave a white,
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night."

—Rupert Brooke

War Debt
Langemarck - St. Julien

SONGS
OF OUR
MAPLE SAPPLINGS

By

Annie Bethune M^cDougald

With a Foreword by
W. D. LIGHTHALL



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Acknowledgments

THE Montreal Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire acknowledge with grateful appreciation the kindness of Mrs. McDougald in permitting the reprint of the poems contained in this brochure. They also desire to express their grateful thanks to Mr. W. D. Lighthall, K.C., of Montreal, for his beautiful and inspiring "Foreword," and also to Mrs. George Lindsey of Toronto, for the subtle conception and artistic execution of the cover design.

The entire proceeds of its sale over the cost of production will be devoted to the "Soldiers' Comfort Fund" of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, Montreal, Que.

Foreword

READERS of this booklet will readily recognize in it the splendid lines entitled "War Debt,"—possibly the finest poetical outburst thus far written regarding the Great War,—beginning:

"Some pay the tax in riven gold,
But we, in blood and tears,"

and ending,

"'Tis thus we women pay."

This feeling lyric originally appeared in the *Canadian Magazine* at the beginning of the war. Few poems of womanhood quite so moving have ever been written. The book contains other poems of similar eloquent beauty, such as those entitled "St. Julien," which refers to what is now more often called "The second battle of Ypres,"

where Canadian valour blocked the way to Calais. This little book will touch the hearts of all who care for our soldier boys. It will be a satisfaction to know that its circulation will aid the "Soldiers' Comfort Fund" of the Daughters of the Empire, of which the authoress, Mrs. A. W. McDougald (daughter of the late James Bethune, Q.C., of Toronto), is Honorary Organizing Secretary for the Province of Quebec.

If it takes the rarest eloquence to express the part of Canadian women in the fierce struggle of the nations, what can be found to do full justice to the boundless heroism of our boys themselves! Those wonderful boys, brought up in lives of peace and safety, who yet go forward knowing perfectly they face death every minute,—soberly and clearly accepting it, while outwardly they mask their sacrifices by the careless mien of their fearlessness; bearing manfully their heavy toils and long marches; used to comfortable homes, yet dwelling in holes and ruins not fit for beasts; "going over the top" with that irresistible self-

abandonment which has made them the terror of tyrants; offering up all they have and are to Liberty and Humanity, as they fall, with the brave smiles on their still faces; and passing on to the Presence above Who faultlessly values the soul who thus passes from service to Him to His eternal love and reward. Who would have thought, four years ago that our young men should have been called to do these things, or could have acquitted themselves to this high point? Or that history could deliberately and truly rank them with the Spartans of Marathon, the legions of Caesar, the Ironsides, the Guards of Waterloo. Yet so are ranked the men of Ypres, of Vimy, of Courcellette, of Lens.

—*W. D. Lighthall.*

“Chateauclair,” Westmount.
September 14, 1917.

War Debt

SOME pay the tax in riven gold,
But we, in blood and tears,
Heart-throbs, lone vigils, and passionate
tendance through the years;
First bending low to cull the drifting smile of
sleeping innocence incarnate;
Then, level, eye to eye, with love's divining glance,
Would read the riddle of the dawning man innate,
Held hostage still by roguish, straight-limbed
youth;
And when, with lifted eyes, do we behold the
flower
Of manly strength stand up above us,
As with an all-protecting recompense;
And we review, with every quickened sense,
Our love, our very soul reflected in a thousand
tricks of grace and mien;

And the blood of a thousand, thousand forbears,
Surging and beating sounds a réveille in the ears:
The mute appeal of that race stream which still
would feed

A thousand yet unborn, our veins the consecrated
channel,

Perchance to be forever staunch'd at Empire
need!

And thus, gazing, the vision fades
To martial, blood-sweet strains that swoon upon
the ears.

And then, with miser fingers, we con the hoarded
treasure of the years,

And "ponder," even as Mary, all human, all divine,
That all such fair investment of fine gold
Should buy us but a crown of glistening, bitter
tears.

So that we look upon that magic square of banded
blue and red;

And though the colors blur, and waver,
Through a haze of tears; we bow the head
In high renunciation.

'Tis thus we women pay.

Langemarck

OUR hearts are swelled with a new
born pride,
And we wait in silent grief,
As one by one the heart stabs come
To the homes of the Maple Leaf.

Men of the sovereign people,
From bench, and desk and plow,
The fadeless crown of the hero
Must rest on every brow.

Last year they played at football,
Now a world rings with their fame;
Beardless boys, and comrades all
They fell, but they played the Game.

The Game where Death's the umpire;
The Game all men abhor;
The last resort of cruel greed;
The age old Game of War.

Coolly they faced that hell of fire,
Desperate, but unafraid;
These veterans of a yearly camp
And quarterly church parade.

Shades of the old Crusaders
Looked on in the moon-lit gleam,
When the best blood of Canada
Mingled with the stream

That flowed at Cressy and Poitiers,
At Blenheim and Waterloo;
Wherever Freedom's Flag has streamed
It's Red and White and Blue.

They are gone, but they leave to Canada
Fame that cannot die;
Bitter the price we pay to-day
But we pay with head held high.

And when the sons of Empire
Are bringing home the sheaves,
They'll wreath the name of Langemarck
With the blood red Maple Leaves.

St. Julien, April 22nd, 1915

OH! fresh and fair green Maple Leaves!
That drip red blood to-day,
The trees are budding once again
And through the land there runs
The promise of another spring;
But to those who built of you
A sure defence 'gainst bitter lonely age,
The sweet spring sap of life has ebbed
Drop by drop, with your hearts' blood,
Leaving but the gnarled and crooked, seared,
brown, trunk,
Defenceless to the winds of fate.

Oh! fair green Maple Leaves!
Brought all too soon to the red glory
Of your early autumn!
All dripping blood for us!
That shouldst have waved
Through a long, and happy summer,
Swaying to the winds, and shimmering in
the sun,
And beckoning all homing things,
To the shelter of your spreading shade.

Oh! dripping, blood red Maple Leaves!
The glory of your passing
Is as the glory of your native hills in Autumn,
Where your parent tree
Hath struck its roots deep into Freedom's
soil,
And nourished by the dews of Empire,
Will bud, and bloom, and bring forth yet more
Maple Leaves,
To stain them red, in that age-long stream
That ever hath dyed the path of Liberty.

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