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THE POEMS WITH PATHOS AND POWER

By L. S. Boardman

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THE POEMS OF L. S. BOARDMAN

POEMS IN MY TEENAGE YEARS (1920's)

* * *

THE SOURCE OF BEAUTY

Away from the noisy city,
Away from the cares of life,
I wandered through the pastures
Where my soul could take delight.

There was only beauty about me.
There was plenty of air to breathe.
I had pleasure in its fullness
As I walked among the trees.

I heard the brooklet trickle
O'er the pebbles smooth and cold.
Then a thrill for nature's beauty
O'er my spirit gently rolled.

Nature spoke to me so gently
As I sat low at her feet:
'Tis the loving God of heaven
Who doth make these things complete.

He harmonizes colors;
He puts music in the air;
Love created nature,
And we find true beauty there.

* * *

THE ROSE OF SHARON

Jesus is the Rose of Sharon,
With a fragrance keen and strong,
How I love my precious Savior
For He fills my life with song.

Jesus is the purest Lily,
Within a beauty deep and true;
How I cherish my Redeemer!
What else could my glad heart do?

Jesus is the Star of Morning,
For His light doth faithfully guide;
Leads me to the healing waters,
There I'll evermore abide.

Jesus is my Lord and Savior,
Oh, He means so much to me!
I shall always love my Jesus,
Precious Lamb of Calvary.

Oh, His love, so pure and holy!
Blood reveals its depth to me;
I shall always serve my Jesus,
Precious Lamb of Calvary.

* * *

THE VOICE OF MANY WATERS

Like the voice of many waters
Doth my Heavenly Father speak;
Like the gentle April showers;
Like the quiet, thoughtful creek:
Like the rippling river's laughing;
Like the foaming waterfall
As it leaps the crags and plunges
We can hear it's thundering call;
Like the sighing of the ocean
As it heaves it's giant chest;
Then it foams and boils and surges;
Then it quiets down, and rests.

My Father's voice is universal,
Every heart can hear Him speak,
Sometimes harsh with kindled anger;
Sometimes, gentle, tender, sweet.

L.S.B. in 1920's

* * * * *

POEMS TO ETHEL IN MEMORIUM

(Ethel was my first companion. She passed away on April 16, 1951.)

"... the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." -- Job
1:21

* * *

OVER THE FENCE

I placed an apple in that shy little hand;
Over the fence I saw her stand;
Eight summers were hers, and mine were ten;
Barefooted youngsters we both were then.

Over the altar and side by side;
We knelt and prayed when the knot was tied;
Nineteen was she now, and I twenty-one;
We turned a new page and life had begun.

Over the years we were turning gray --
Time and tide were having their way.
Together we'd wept and together toiled,
Till our roots were entwined beneath love's soil.

Then from over the River she heard the call;
She answered it quickly, and that was all.
Apples ripen these days as they always did,
But they just aren't the same as when I was a kid!

* * *

UNTITLED #1

She's safe in the fold of heaven now,
So I wonder what makes me cry,

Perhaps it's because she'd have kissed me again,
If she'd known she was going to die.

* * *

UNTITLED #2

Just a silent grave under the trees --
The snow is deep; I cannot find the spot.
Separation now -- Reunion in the morning!
I too am Heaven bound!

* * *

UNTITLED #3

That heart that beat for me,
And loved,
Broke away from earthly scenes,
And sailed above.

To the grave? Ah, no!
To heavens portal went!
That heart is healed for Aye --
My own is rent.

Time does not heal as fast
As some will say,
But yonder in heaven's clime
All tears are wiped away.

* * *

ADVICE FROM ETHEL

I believe it was in the summer of 1932 that Ethel, my fiancée at that time, that sent me this advice:

1. June 22: "Please don't neglect Bible reading and prayer. You must keep victory and keep progressing spiritually."
2. June 18: "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it Holy."
3. June 21: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

4. June 29: "Somebody loves you and wants you to know; would like to be with you wherever you go."

5. July 21: "A little less of you or me -- a little more of us."

6. July 28: "Sure, there's nothing half so sweet in life as love's young dream."

7. (Aug. 18) "Why worry about it? Just make up your mind to do better when you get another chance, and thank your lucky stars for the lesson."

* * *

ETHEL'S BUTTERFLY QUILT

Ethel had a butterfly quilt partly finished when she was taken.

She intended to finish the quilt,
but little did she dream
That God had other arrangements,
And she wouldn't even finish the seam.

She had finished hundreds before,
But little did she know,
That we'd view the needle where she placed it
Nearly forty years ago.

Her last stitch is a mute reminder,
That a moment can become sublime --
And to complete our Divine Assignment
We'd better redeem the time.

L.S.B. -- 10-13-86

* * *

REMINISCENCE

The shades of night were slowly falling,
And I hitched old Dapple Gray
To a buggy, old and broken,
And I slowly rode away --
Up the hill, and by the pasture,
Where we used to walk alone,
When those summer suns were setting,
In our old Green Mountain home.

There's the maple where we carved
Our initials side by side;
There's the brooklet where we courted
Where the pink arbutus hide;
I can see those yellow moonbeams
In the restful twilight still,
As with hand-in-hand we slowly
Followed cowpaths up the hill.

Then we tarried -- 'twas in springtime,
Watching moonbeams, lazy, slow,
As they played with silent shadows
In the meadow down below.
Take me back, old Dapple, quickly,
To those youthful, old-time days;
To my old Green Mountain sweetheart,
With her plain, old-fashioned ways.

* * *

SPEAK TO ME, MOTHER, AGAIN

I've learned what it is to be lonely,
But I'll be as brave as I can;
Yet, it will help a lot in life struggle,
If you'll speak to me, Mother, again!

I'm out in the mid-stream of life now,
And I have become a man;
But I feel like a little child today;
Oh, sing to me, Mother, again!

Then rook me to sleep by the fireside,
In the old squeaky chair, and then --
Lay me once more on the pillow,
And pray with me, Mother, again.

The loads of life will get heavy,
As I'm plodding across life's short span;
But I'll make it, ah yes, I will make it,
If you'll walk with me, Mother, again.

* * *

FAILURE OF THE GRASS

Back to the old Green Mountains;
Back to the old rough shack;
Back to her cheeks that were red like the rose,
That is the way that my lonely heart goes --
Memory is calling me back.

I remember the dew on the meadows;
I remember the Whip-poor-will's song;
I remember her smile that was just for me,
When by blood was young and my heart was free,
But since then the way has been long!

I remember the rickety staircase,
And the oil lamp's yellow glow;
I remember the feel of the morning sun --
And our long, long walks when the day was done;
None other I cared to know!

Beside me she fought life's hard battles;
She petted my troubles away;
When the world went all wrong,
She'd come back with a song,
'Till heaven stole her away.

We turned the clods under the maples;
Faced the world with a prayer and a tear;
But the grass cannot heal,
The heartaches I feel,
Though it's grown there for many a year.

* * *

OUR LITTLE OLD MODEL-A

We dust banged around the country,
In a simple sort of way;
Just palled around from here to there,
In our little old Model-A.

More contented than those million heirs
I met the other day,
As we palled around from here to there
In our little old model-A.

She cost us twenty dollars,
And she sure had seen her day,

But we did a heap of ridin'
In that little old Model-A.

We honeymooned for fifteen years,
We patched the tires, and say,
We sure did pound the tarvia [sic]
With that little old Model-A.

Now I drive a recent model,
Almost new, alone, but say;
I'm longing for my boyhood sweetheart,
And our little old Model-A.

And we'll head back to the mountains,
Of our childhood right away;
And in dreams she'll sit beside me,
In our little old Model-A.

* * * * *

POEMS TO MY CHILDREN

* * *

FROM FATHER TO SON

I tell you my lad, it pays to live clean;
Let the others do wrong; let the others be mean:
Don't give in to bad influence from old friends or new;
Being noble and upright is the makings of you.

Integrity pays off as nothing else will.
Spend all of your life climbing honesty's hill.
Speak the truth always and in people's mind,
They'll soon have you branded as the very best kind.

Never betray one if he trusts you an inch;
Confidence established is more than a cinch.
If you let him down once you are less of a man;
And he'll never be sure he can trust you again.

Look the world in the eye; there's no room for bluff;
No veneers in this mill -- no camouflage stuff.
Don't polish the apple with a worm in the core;
You may fool folk a little, but you'll fool yourself more.

You may live in the shadows and seem to get by,
And make the world think you're a wonderful guy.
But the harvest is coming, for we reap what we sow,
And the mills of God's justice are still grinding you know.

The world is out looking for men that are true;
If you are of that brand, they'll be looking for you.
Men do their best work with nails that are straight,
With boards that aren't warped, and with bricks that are baked.

So be straight as arrow and clean as a pin;
In the long run of life you know you will win.
Character is gold; reputation is brass;
Choose wisely between them and wave as you pass!

* * *

MY WAYWARD DAUGHTER

Child of my flesh and blood --
Offspring of my soul --
Severed from the ancient moorings --
Floundering toward the fatal goal.

Like the compass' fragile needle,
Towards the loadstone quickly leaps;
Her strongest pull was toward sin's magnet
In the camp that Satan keeps.

She was all for freedom's license.
She the world fondly court,
But she found eternal bondage
Of the most enslaving sort.

Pleasure-bent was she from childhood;
The heights of thrill to reach somehow;
Clutching fun's fast fleeting phantom;
She is bent with weeping now.

With discipline's restraint tabooed,
She rashly laid aside
The noble holy pattern
For which her mother died.

She felt sure she had the answers
On her tender, infant lips,

But they failed to hold her steady,
When with life she came to grips.

Frustrated now, and disillusioned,
She has reached life's empty goal;
And her needle has gone fitful,
As it spins a crazy role.

Oh, the reaping of the vintage,
That must follow in the wake,
Is paying off in bitter coinage,
For the road she chose to take.

Whence leads this road-rebellious,
That she in youth has trod?
But to a dismal room in the nether gloom,
Away from God.

Some millionaires have lost their wealth,
And played the pauper's role;
But I, a parent lost far more --
My daughter's soul.

* * *

TWO PROBLEMS

He's six and a half years old,
And a real "he boy" I'll say,
But God would have a little problem,
If He took him home today.

He'd have to get a slingshot,
And some little racer cars,
Strings and kites and marbles,
And a host of chocolate bars.

Heaven's always neat and tidy,
At least that's what they say;
But 'twould soon be topsy-turvy
If God took him home today!

We, too would have a problem,
For 'twould leave us mighty blue,
And we'd have a stack of doodads
That we'd like to send up too.

Now I feel a mighty tuggin'
Just a-thinkin' of it so,
And if God reached down and took him,
I guess we all would want to go!

* * * * *

DEATH-ROUTE POEMS

GOD NEEDS MARTYRS

God needs martyrs -- few are willing;
One in millions qualify
Falsely accused -- never exonerated;
Others live, but these must die!

Die, but not by nature's process;
Trampled -- stomped into the ground;
Upon a cross or flaming fagot,
But complain? -- There's not a sound!

Moses rallied to his people,
Led them with a visioned eye,
But he failed to gain the laurels,
God preferred to let him die.

Stephen, God's most faithful martyr,
Knelt amid the flying stones,
Saw both grave and heaven open,
And he trod the path alone.

Tender hands his flesh did bury,
But his spirit wafted high,
As the Savior stood to greet him
Never more to say, "Good-bye."

John the Baptist, the "way preparer,"
Preached the truth and paid the price;
Chose to decrease -- God had willed it,
But he gained eternal life!

Christ works best with faithful martyrs.
He needs such to stem the tide.
Few will risk it -- less stay with it,
But with such He doth abide.

In the kingdom, Yon, eternal,
When rewards are meted out
There will be some great surprises,
And some shocks without a doubt.

For the faithful who were trampled
Underneath the tyrant's frown,
Trembling there -- expecting nothing,
Will receive the martyr's crown!

-- L. S. Boardman, 4-17-85

* * *

MY CRUCIFIED SELF

Oh, the relief from the carnal mind!
From ears that were deaf, and eyes that were blind.
Hopeless seemed my condition, but God was so kind --
No other help could I hope to find.

I suffered so badly with that carnal load,
Trying to keep saved was an uphill road.
That rebel within with his jabbing goad --
'Till God put him out and took up His abode.

Old self gave me trouble, a-plenty, and grief --
'Till the Old Man died -- then, Oh, such relief!
God crucified that hateful thief,
That was beating me down, with no relief.

Now, with love that flows with eternal peace --
And from the bondage of the past, a happy release!
And with grace from God, a steady increase--
And a "homing instinct" like a flock of geese.

Now, the crucified life, in the dust at His feet!
A love slave forever -- no thought of retreat.
Eager for heaven, the blood-washed to greet,
And with Jesus my Savior in an endless retreat.

-- L. S. Boardman, Sept. 28, 1991

* * *

I HAD TO CROSS JORDAN ALONE!

I had to cross Jordan alone!
None to share my tears and my groan!
But I died to old self,
Put the world on the shelf;
But I had to cross Jordan alone.

I had to cross Jordan alone!
Deep conviction had cut to the bone!
Then the Holy Ghost came
With heart-cleansing flame,
But I had to cross Jordan alone.

Yes, I had to cross Jordan alone!
For my sin only Christ could atone.
But the Godhead, all Three
Were pulling for me,
But I had to cross Jordan alone.

* * *

MY DEAR OLD "DEATH-ROUTE BUDDY"

He wanted to cut bigger circles --
He wanted to ring greater bells --
As a result he got in the human,
For the glamour that Satan sells.

So he'd have larger crowds to preach to --
And they'd love the way he would preach.
He had to make a few concessions --
But it seemed worth it -- more souls to reach!

He'd still preach DEATH ROUTE HOLINESS,
But he'd have to remove the "teeth" --
And be careful not to bite too deeply,
And pretend it's the same belief.

He used to get much opposition --
But now its largely applause.
He still thinks his choice was a good one --
It seemed to enhance the cause.

He forgot about John the Baptist,
Elijah and Stephen and Paul;

And millions and millions of others,
Who loyally answered the call.

The glamour of it seemed enticing --
Why was he slow to catch on?
And waste years on the tens and the dozens,
But now he can preach to the throngs!

The TV pressure was the first one,
That he thought he could handle OK --
But his new peers dulled his convictions --
What a sad and a pitiful day!

Next came the video serpent --
It strikes with deadly fang.
But he had to "go along" to stay with them,
And fit in as one of the gang.

His long altars filled with seeker --
'Twas easy to sweep them in now!
He learned how to keep them happy,
And to keep a soft point on the plow.

His meeting came along like box cars --
There were plenty of calls far and wide.
The larger ones seemed more appealing --
So it wasn't hard to decide.

The dress code was also a problem --
They didn't seem it the same.
It seemed better not to say much about it --
'Twas almost like playing a game!

Old friendships, most sadly, were cooling --
The new ones had a thrilling appeal.
The kindness showered upon him,
For awhile, at least, seemed most unreal!

Sentiment took the place of conviction --
Tears on the altar looked good --
But it wasn't for DEATH-ROUTE CONVICTION,
Which none of them quite understood.

Then a shallowness came over his preaching --
He preached it the way they liked best.
Some slipped large bills to his pocket,

And boasted how much they were blest.

'Twas relief to avoid persecutions,
And the pressures that endangered his health,
Money was no longer a problem,
As he began to accumulate wealth.

So, my dear old DEATH-ROUTE buddy,
Things will never be quite the same --
As our grief goes deep -- we hurt and weep --
And Satan is to blame.

It was not to the throngs Jesus catered --
He promised us the twos and threes.
So, old self must not be pampered --
Only Christ we determine to please.

Any urge to become more important --
We killed when we died to old self --
Now it's not what we want, but what He wants --
Even if we're put on the shelf,

When we are "something" we've missed it.
When nothing -- we'll be at our best.
The true worth that took Christ to Golgotha
With us is the only true test.

* * * * *

POEMS ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

While driving from Des Moines, Iowa to Conway, Arkansas on May 2, 1985, and talking out loud to myself, I said, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if God would give me a poem today." The Holy Spirit must have heard my remark, because almost immediately He put the first verse of this poem into my mind. I jotted down these four lines and made several attempts to write more, but could not. Then I prayed, "Holy Spirit, I know there is more to this poem than what you have giving me. Would you please be do kind as to give me the rest of this poem?" The words were barely out of my mouth when He started pouring the rest of the verses into my mind. Without stopping my car, the lines came as fast as I could put them on a pad beside me. In closing this brief testimony, I wish to honor the sweet, Holy Ghost by including this poem which He inspired and put my mind on that occasion.

DOVE DIVINE

O Thou Trinity's Precious Dove,
Advocate of Holy love,

Comforter, by Grace Divine,
And to think that Thou art mine!

Thou who makes our Saviour real,
With a Presence we can feel --
Intercessor, most divine --
All heaven thrills this heart of mine!

We honor Thee, our Blessed Host --
Sweet Spirit of God, Sweet Holy Ghost!
Above all things of time and earth,
Since we've found the Second Birth.

O Thou Condescending Dove
From God's throne room high above, --
To this carnal heart of mine;
Making pure and holy Thine.

Takes away my bent to sin --
Puts God's holiness within --
Starts a fire to burn for aye,
To eternity's endless day.

My allegiance Thou shalt always know,
As the eons come and go.
Holy Spirit, Dove divine --
I'm so glad that Thou art mine.

L. S. Boardman, 5-2-85

* * *

LIFE'S GREATEST LOSS (With Scripture References)

Should I loss the Holy Spirit ----- (Judges 16:20-b). It would be life's greatest loss, ----- (Phil. 3:8). If I gained the throne of honor ----- (Num. 22:17, 18). While I laid aside my cross ----- (Matt. 10:38).

Were I to grieve the precious Spirit, ----- (Eph. 4:30).

Oh, the tender "Dove of God," ----- (Matt. 3:16-b). I would rather die an early death, ----- (2 Kings 4:18-20). And be hurried to the sod, ----- (Gen. 3:19).

Than to miss divine appointments, ----- (Luke 19:14-44).

And thus follow human plans, ----- (James 4:13-16). And at heart I fail my calling ----- (I Peter 1:15-16). And have blood on my hands. ----- (Matt. 27:24-25).

I might still promote revivals, ----- (II Chron. 7:14).

And still preach very fine, ----- (I Sam. 10:10-11). And point folks to the narrow way, ----- (Matt. 7:14). And hold them to the line. ----- (II Cor. 13:2).

And with altars lined with seekers, ----- (Acts 2:41).

And most zealous while I preach, ----- (Rom. 10:2). And sense not the "Dove's" departure, ----- (Jud. 16:20). Till He's forever out of reach. ----- (I Sam. 28:15).

While longing to be famous, ----- (Isa. 14:13-14).

Grieving thus the Holy Spirit, ----- (Isa. 63:10). I might preach with only sentiment, ----- (Isa. 30:10). That's the kind some like the most. ----- (II Tim. 4:3-4).

And avoid repercussions, ----- (John 16:1-3; Acts 7:54-60).

Taking pains to step aside, ----- (I Tim. 1:5-6; Jud. 11-13). To salve up one's own conscience, ----- (Luke 10:29). When wrongs are rationalized. ---- (Prov. 14:12; 30:12; Rev. 3:17).

Aims to keep the carnal happy, ----- (Eph. 6:6).

And to make them each his friend, ----- (II Sam. 15:5-6). What a sad and bitter story, ----- (II Sam. 18:33). When one's life has reached the end ----- (II Kings 20:1).

Eulogizing o'er one's casket, ----- (I Kings 13:30-31).

Will not save him from the 'fire' ---- (Matt. 23:33; Rev. 19:20). Which is awaiting the false preachers, ---- (I John 4:1; I Kings 13:18). When at last they shall expire. ----- (I Kings 13:24).

Being called to preach the gospel, ---- (I Tim. 1:12; Luke 9:60).

Proved a very perilous day, ----- (Matt. 27:5; Matt. 23:37, 38). For many preach the truth to others, ---- (I Tim. 1:12; Luke 9:60). And themselves have missed the way. ----- (I Cor. 9:27).

With their eyes upon life's comforts, ----- (II Tim. 4:10).

And their hearts were lifted up, ----- (I Tim. 3:6). They despised to join the martyrs, ----- (Rev. 17:6; Acts 7:54-60). And refuse the bitter cup. ----- (Matt. 26:39-42).

Pointing to their well lined altars, ----- (Acts 2:41).

They supposed that proved the fact, ----- (Luke 10:17-20). That they'd obeyed the Lord themselves, ----- (Acts 26:19-20; II Tim. 4:10). And never once looked back. ----- (Gen. 19:26; Luke 9:62).

But our Christ -- He holds the road map, ----- (Isa. 30:21).

And He knows just where we've erred, ----- (John 4:16-19, 29). When we failed the path of duty, ----- (Matt. 21:30-31). And we compromised the Word. ----- (II Peter 3:16).

Lord, keep the fear of hell upon us, ----- (Matt. 5:29, 30).

Lest we take the hireling's way, ----- (John 10:12-13). And for lust we sell our conscience, ----- (I Tim. 4:2). While we are slipping every day. ----- (Jer. 8:5).

Standing bold before the people; ----- (I Sam. 28:15; Acts 1:18).

Putting up a stubborn bluff, ----- (Matt. 26:24-25). While in our secret heart life, ----- (Ps. 19:12). Things are getting awful rough. ----- (I Sam. 28:15; Acts 1:18).

While working up enthusiasm, ----- (I Kings 18:28-29).

And we seem to "ring the bell," ----- (Prov. 14:12). With true unction all departed, ----- (Judges 16:20-b). Is a tell too sad to tell. ----- (Matt. 23:37-38).

Do we dare to turn the ledger? ----- (Rev. 20:12).

With our motives written down; ----- (I John 3:12). Hireling preachers, heed this warning, ----- (John 10:12, 13). Lest you fail to gain the crown. ----- (Rev. 3:11).

Prostrate then, we'll fall before Him, ----- (Phil. 2:10, 11).

Be it I, or be it you; ----- (Rom. 2:11). At the judgment we must answer, ----- (Eccl. 11:9). Why we preach the way we do. ----- (Jer. 23:16).

Secret sins and carnal motives, ----- (Eccl. 12:14).

That are too off-shade to tell; ---- (Prov. 27:6; Matt. 26:48-49). Blind men lauded to Heaven, ----- (Matt. 15:14). Jesus curses such to hell. ----- (Matt. 22:13-14).

Where the hottest fires are burning, ----- (Matt. 23:14; Mark 12:40; Luke 20:47).

There to spend endless night, ----- (Jude 13). Having damned our souls and people, ----- (Matt. 15:14). With a false facsimile of light. ----- (Matt. 6:23).

* * *

ANGUISH

Anguish is a stronger word than grief.
Heaven's Comforter, the Holy Ghost, alone
Can bring relief. (John 14:16)

Into His arms we fall,
Exhausted, and in pain,
For in His arms there is nothing to lose,
And everything to gain. (John 14:27)

When circumstances don't improve,
Our hearts can sing --
Because of the relief from anguish
That our Comforter doth bring. (John 15:26)

* * * * *

POEMS ON VARIOUS SPIRITUAL THEMES

* * *

DRIFT OF THE CHURCH

We went to church in the good old days
And were kind to one another; The love
Flame burned and the Lord smiled down
On every sister and brother.

When church time arrived the urge would come on;
You couldn't have kept us away;
'Twas a precious hour -- God came with power,
As we'd sing and shout and pray

The Holy Ghost was always there
To hover, and brood, and yearn;
Our hearts did melt like wax in the fire,
As the flame continued to burn.

Our church wasn't large but we love it so good:
'Twas the grandest hour of the week,
Then we'd gather there, for songs and prayer,
And the presence of the Lord to seek.

But as time went by as it always does,
The devil slipped in the door;
We still went to church -- were a loyal crowd;
But it wasn't the same any more.

We fussed sometimes over little things,
Then hashed-it-over at home; And the
Lord who was grieved, was the first to leave
Our beloved church alone.

We sang the songs from the same old books,
But they just didn't "click" any more;
When the service was through we shook hands
With a few -- Then bolted for the door.

We still went to church -- we were duty-bound;
But the romance of going had died;
We dreaded it too, as the tensions grew,
But we felt we were justified.

"We" weren't to blame for the things that were said,
Things needed to be straightened out;
So we had our "say", but Oh, what a pitiful day
When we smothered the love flame out!

Then we put on revivals & contests & drives;
Our Sunday school held up real good;
Our pastor was wise & refused to take sides,
As much as he possibly could.

So we fell into a routine, and went through
The grind; We held two revivals a year
With week-end conventions & visitations campaigns,
With preaching, the best one could hear.

But the sweet Holy Ghost was grieved & was gone,
And we didn't know what to do;
So we blundered on -- a pitiful sight;
We tried, but we couldn't break through.

So we finally relaxed & gave up the fight,

And aimed for a compromise goal;
Why should we worry & get nervous and sick
Over something we couldn't control?

We still tithed our money, preached two works of grace;
We were doing the best we knew how;
Tho' some had lost interest and drifted away,
New ones were filling in now.

We tried not to go worldly -- we meant to do right,
We still shield away from the worst,
But little by little we were forced to give way,
To TV and bobbed hair, which God cursed.

Hollywood was setting the dress pattern now,
Low necks, and short shirts without sleeves,
And pant-suits, abomination to God (Deut. 22:5)
And Oh, how the Holy Ghost grieves.

Two decades slipped by; the old-timers died off,
While some of them moved far away;
And the joys of the past were a glaring contrast
To the dryness we now had today.

Our children and grandchildren now ran the church;
Not one of them had ever prayed through;
Nor remembered the day when the Lord had full sway
With fire in the pulpit and pew.

We engaged a good pastor -- a university man;
The most talented we'd had for years;
And with polished psychology he "salved up" the crowd,
As he preached just to tickle their ears.

It was harder to hold the young people now;
They objected to the rigorous way;
So we laid it aside, & to interest them tried,
In every conceivable way.

The Sunday night service was the hardest to hold;
There were too many attractions outside;
So we put on cantatas, and movies and plays
After Holy Ghost conviction had died.

We picked our evangelists more carefully now;
Both kinds were still to be had;

But some didn't dare to preach 'gainst bobbed hair,
And Jewelry, and make-up, and fads.

They wouldn't offend for the sake of their pay;
But soft-peddled the carnal, and sin;
With neither anointing, nor prayer life nor power;
There are the ones we brought in.

We still had seekers in revivals like this;
We'd pray for five minutes with these;
Then we'd gather about, sing, talk, and shout,
And thus hurry them off from their knees.

But old-time conviction that makes people sick,
'Till they can't eat or smile for days;
And restitution's galore were all hears of no more,
In our new "modern holiness" ways.

We used to be ridiculed -- despised here in town;
They call us "fanatics" back there,
We dressed to plain -- walked to church in the rain,
They laughed, but we didn't much care.

But now we're accepted, the world has no gripes,
We never offend any more;
They approve of our methods, & the standards we hold.
And no one gets ruffled or sore.

So we're just marking time, with our conscience gone dead,
And with our souls deceived, we must face
A backslidden church of judgement-bound folk
Having fallen from a high state of grace.

* * *

PLA-CE-BO RELIGION

Catholic or Calvinist --
Which is worse?
BOTH in the scriptures
Are under the curse.

Both are expected
To sin every day.
Their sins MAY BE forgiven,
The are not WASHED AWAY!

One prays to Mary:
The other prays to Christ.
Both PLA-CE-BO
Their sin and strife.

They find no real cure --
Only mental relief:
Conscience and conviction
Put fast asleep.

Soothed and brainwashed,
PLA-CE-BO style!
They forfeit the cure
With relief for a while.

On one thing they agree,
And sing the same song:
"THEY CAN'T LIVE RIGHT,
And they can't die wrong!"

* * *

THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

From the tavern crowd, with its rock music, loud,
That's hard to understand;
To a Spirit-filled preacher of gospel truth --
T'was the touch of the Master's hand.

From the devil's child with the crowd that's wild,
He accepts what God had planned.
Now, with a lovely wife, free from sin and strife --
T'was the touch of the Master's hand.

From the torture of guilt, dissipation and filth,
He had thought that old life was just grand.
But now, condemnation-free, with its awful misery --
T'was the touch of the Master's hand.

From the purposeless life, with its chaos and strife;
Nothing turned out as planned.
Now with eyes on the prize, God had planned in the skies,
T'was the touch of the Master's hand.

From affections perverted, came virtues alerted;

Christ the great chasm had spanned.
Now with God's grace replete, there'll be no retreat
From the touch of the Master's hand.

* * *

HE IS NOT DEAD

They put shackles on His wrists,
And thorns upon His head;
They even killed Him,
But He is not dead!

They nailed His hands and feet,
The blood ran red;
They placed Him in the tomb
But He is not dead!

He's still being crucified,
As the Bible said.
Men still are driving nails and weaving crowns,
But He is not dead!

* * *

WHEN MOTHER PRAYED

The clock struck three
My midnight fling was o'er.
I staggered home,
Slipped in and locked the door.

I reeled -- T'was dark --
And yet I found the stair.
I heard a sob -- a groan --
My mother was in prayer.

My heart was cold
Toward God and man alike;
But all was changed
When mother prayed that night!

* * *

WE THANK GOD

We thank God for the love flame, burning
We thank Him for the aching, yearning
Of a soul on fire with passion
For a lost and dying world.

We thank Him for His sacred nearness --
We thank Him for the crystal clearness
Of a soul that's washed in blood,
Of a conscience, purged with fire!

* * *

FROM DAWN TO TWILIGHT

The sky is radiant as I faced the East;
The sky is golden as I face the West,
I so love the dawn and the twilight shades,
That I can't tell which is best.

I knew a man that faced the dawn,
And his skies showed not a care,
But he missed the way in the heat of the day,
And twilight brought despair.

I too had regrets as most folk do,
As I pushed on mile by mile,
But with wrongs made right before it came night,
I can face the west with a smile.

As so it goes in the journey of life --
We may start life's day just right;
But if we miss the road as we carry the load,
Things will look far different at night.

Life's sun may rise in a marvelous way,
And follow you into the crowds,
But if you fail to do right in the midst of the fight,
It will set in a bank of clouds.

Happy is he who ends life's day
As one you cannot flout,
With eyes as bright in the shades of night,
As they were when he started out.

So let me face the West as I faced the East
More than sixty years ago;

Wit a crimson west at its radiant best,
When my hair is as white as snow.

* * *

BECAUSE OF CALVARY

My bruised heart healed at the touch of Jesus,
My broken life mended as He laid His hand on me,
All sin fled when He spoke forgiveness,
And it's all because of Calvary.

I met Him in prayer and He solved sin's problem.
Strong chains snapped as He set this captive free,
Then the Holy Ghost came in cleansing power,
And it's all because of Calvary.

I lost my love for worldly pleasure,
Old friends turned far away from me;
Now the saints of God are my boon companions,
And it's all because of Calvary.

I can recommend Jesus to you, neighbor;
No matter how crushed your heart may be,
He'll give you a song in the darkest hour,
And it's all because of Calvary.

I'll make it some day to the city called heaven,
With heartbreaks gone for eternity,
We'll forget the hard road we traveled over,
And it's, all because of Calvary.

* * *

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

A sluggish brute with dusty feet
In plodding southward in retreat;
A mother in the saddle rests,
A baby nursing at her breast.

Deity doth ride the beast!
The choice of heaven, too, at least!
Herod is foaming at the mouth.
But the weary beast is plodding south.

Joseph staff in hand and slow,
Over the sand drifts, piled like snow,
Struggles on with anxious tread
A dozen steps or more ahead.

Singing of the Shepherd Lad,
Mary rides on pale, but glad.
I would rather be the beast,
Than Herod reveling at the feast!

* * *

A CHRISTIAN'S ALWAYS HAPPY

A Christian's always happy,
I can hear one singing now
With the reins beneath his arm pits,
And his hand upon the plow.

His eyes are warm and steady;
He is looking straight ahead;
He loves the role of the humble soul,
And the hand from which he's fed.

* * *

UNFINISHED TASK

Many times I mowed the grass,
And plowed the snow,
You know.

I built the steps,
Windows and doors,
And did the chores,
Of yours.
Inside and out of doors.

I built the front
And fixed the eaves:
Now I resign --
My spirit grieves
And leaves.

I preached the truth
And knew the sting

That it would bring --
A sad thing.

My dream of years
Could not come true
Because of you,
So it fell through.

Maybe God will work a plan
With the new man.
I hope He can.

Also, use this
Old man
Where ever he can.

* * *

UNTITLED #4

Some have had most heavy losses,
In the human side of time;
Yet retained the all-essential,
Which makes everything sublime.

You and I are no exception,
As we tread life's narrow road.
We seek not a bed of roses,
Or a lessening of the load.

We seek only Christ's approval --
Nothing else has any claim
On our purified affections,
As we press on in His Name!

We'll stay true to our commitments,
As we come through every test --
As we're nearing our promotion,
The Last mile will be the best.

* * *

A MISNOMER

Are you a worldly Christian?
There's no such thing, my friend.

Jesus' words are final,
On them you may depend.

"Love not the world, He warned us;
"Neither the things thereof."
Christ won't play second fiddle,
Or accept a fraction of love.

"They are not of the world," He insisted;
(Those who are born again).
It's the devil's crowd that's worldly
The scriptures make this plain.

This world is swiftly passing
With all its sin and woe.
In fervent heat will the mountains melt,
The Bible tells us so.

That which you love the most
Will soon go up in smoke.
If you are a slave to worldly things,
You'd better break the yoke.

Jesus never was worldly
See the 17th chapter of John.
And his followers are all to be like Him.
His words can be depended upon.

So make thou the choice, my neighbor
'Twixt this world and heaven to come.
Do it now, or miss it forever,
In God's eternal home.

* * *

WE THANK THEE!

We thank Thee for the sacred nearness --
We thank Thee for that crystal clearness --
Of a heart that's bathed in blood --
Of a soul that's clothed in fire!

Old self at the terminal forever --
Crucified! lying dead at His feet --
It cost so dearly to get there --
I'll never consider retreat.

So few there are who remain there --
They think they are dead when they are blest --
But they fall far short of their "Calvary" --
When they're faced with the final test.

Let us never be fooled in this matter,
Like those who rejected the cross --
But like Christ, we mean to stay with it,
To avoid everlasting loss.

* * *

MY RESOLVE

Christ saves me just now --
With my hands to the plow --
And my eyes are fixed on the goal.
So I'll never give in
And go back into sin,
For Jesus has rescued my soul.

L. S. B. 1988

* * *

I CANNOT HELP BUT LOVE HIM

I saw the blood drip from His hands;
I saw the sweat upon His brow;
His dying eyes were fixed on me --
I can not help but love him now.

* * *

JESUS LET ME WALK WITH THEE

Jesus, let me walk with Thee,
Through stormy nights,
And through the trails that fall.
Thy tender Grace will lead me on my way,
As through the night
I hear the Shepherd call.

* * *

THAT PRECIOUS BLOOD

That precious blood on Calvary split --
No other blood could pay that price,
For my guilt soul, or my carnal heart,
Or break the power of Satan's vice!

Jesus died and so did I.
He shed His blood, and I shed tears,
Repenting of the guilty past,
And the sin-stained record of the years.

* * *

CALVINISM VERSUS ARMINIANISM

1. THE CALVINIST -- "Sinful and carnal,
But we think we'll get by.
God says it won't work --
But still we're going to try.

2. THE ARMINIAN -- We are no longer carnal,
And we commit no sins:
But some may change their tune
When eternity begins.

3. THE MONSTROSITY -- Arminian or Calvinist,
Make up your mind --
But if on both sides of the fence
You must be stone blind.

4. THE SHOWDOWN -- With the Calvinists it is sin --
With us it's a mistake.
Both had better come clean
This side of hell's gate.

5. MY RESPONSE -- This treatise is too lengthy
For our monthly, you'll agree,
But I can mail it to every preacher
To the borders of the B.M.C.

* * *

RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH

I had a rendezvous with death

In a revival many years ago;
Old carnal self was crucified,
And received the final "killing blow!"
My friend, has this death come to you?
Or did you fail your rendezvous?

I had a rendezvous with God;
Father, Son and Holy Ghost!
This Triune One is now in charge!
He was my Guest, but now He is my Host!
My friend, does He have full charge of you?
Or did you miss your rendezvous?

I had a rendezvous with death--
To the world, and self, and sin I dared to die!
I threw my bankrupt heart's door open then,
And let God come, Old Self to crucify!
My friend, is this death real to you?
Or did you fail your rendezvous?

Soon, one more glad rendezvous with Christ,
As the rapture of the saints draws near!
In the clouds, when the "zero hour" strikes --
Like lightning rents the sky, He shall appear!
My friend, your lamp must then be filled, and trimmed and burning too,
Or you will forever fail your rendezvous!

* * *

NEVER DESPAIR

Only going to live once--
And I'm almost through it.
Whatever God wants
I intend to do it!

I've been that way
For sixty years now,
Ever since I first
Put my hand to the plow.

I did not go astray
When the world came in sight,
But I chose Christ in childhood
When I saw that it was right.

I hope you will follow
This pattern, my friend.
You'll never be sorry
When you get to the end.

If you obey God down here
He will trust you up there.
So stick to the trail
And never despair.

* * *

THE HYOID BONE

[Definition, Oxford Dictionary: hyoid n. & adj. Anat. _ n. (in full hyoid bone) a U-shaped bone in the neck which supports the tongue. -- DVM]

Wired together -- these bones of yesteryears --
These ribs that housed the heart and lungs alike --
These finger bones, now bare --
What a sight!

These toe bones to marshall music ne'er missed a beat.
These disks that housed the spinal cord -- t'was nature's art!
This skull bone -- computer case --
Well did its part.

These arm bones labored long what'er the weather --
These shoulder blades, which held it all together --
This pelvis, flexible, versatile and strong;
(Muscles and sinews to the past belong).

Where sinews held, 'tis wire now that holds,
Bone to bone, correct, but dry and cold!
Back yonder, never seen in work or play --
But now, just hanging in a glass display!

All bones, but one, were attached to another bone;
Only one, not thus attached, floated alone.
And absent now, since it was not attached,
And who would care that it is gone at last!

This bone of speech, hung floating near the tongue,
To help modulate the voice for everyone;
To know the mood of soul and heart and mind --

Whether it be cruel, or tender, sweet, or kind.

All other bones are easy to foretell --
How they will respond -- they do their function well.
But this bone follows the changing moods of men --
To wound, or heal, again, and again, and again.

Dagger words, that sometimes break the heart --
Wreck the home, and tear the world apart!
But in other moods -- words, honey-sweet did flow,
From this odd bone, which controls the tongue, you know.

But it's missing now, perhaps it's for the best.
Since it caused more harm to the world than all the rest.
It relayed to the tongue the vileness of the heart,
And major wars, this hyoid bone did start!

This bone which reveals the heart is neither bad or good.
The Bible never mentions it -- no reason why it should.
For when the heart is pure, this bone does very well.
So it's the heart and not the bone that puts the soul
in heaven or in hell.

Then let our hearts be sanctified in Holy Love,
So this floating bone will glorify our God above!
Since this bone relays to the tongue the mood that's in the heart,
It's not responsible for what it must impart.

* * *

CAUTION

The one who does evil
Cannot see very far.
He's guided by flesh
Instead of a star!

In the realm of the damned
He'll never forget
The moment of pleasure,
And the years of regret.

He thought he'd escape
The retributive blow
He didn't believe
That men reap what they sow.

So he took a long chance,
And he failed in the game.
The laws of God caught him,
For they are ever the same.

He put up a bold front;
Appeared a wonderful guy.
He forgot he was under
The all-seeing eye!

That an angel kept tally --
Writing down every sin;
The blanket was lifted
When the books were brought in!

While the righteous did gather
On yon golden shore,
He was dragged down by demons,
And was heard of no more.

Let us be very careful,
That we're not that man,
For the story is repeated
Again and again!

* * *

I CHOOSE MY WAY

Two boards were sawed from a single log,
and were trucked a separate way;

One to a polished piano front,
To hear rapturous melodies,
And be ever on display.

The other to make a coffins,
Destined to decay;

But I'm not a board--
I choose my way!

* * *

GOD NEEDS MEN

God needs men to climb the mountains!
God needs men to ford the streams!
Men with fire in their spirits --
Men with empires in their dreams.

Men who move like soldiers, marching!
Men of courage to the core!
Men who'll live and die for Jesus,
As our fathers heretofore.

Men with eyes like steel, and noble!
Men who speak the truth, and die!
Men who walk within the furnace,
Ne'er complain, nor ask HIM why.

These make fodder for the cannon!
These make kindling for the flame!
Men who walk among life's ashes,
Head erect, and faith the same.

Men who match the tracks of Jesus!
Men who pattern after Paul!
Men who hear the call of duty,
And respond by giving all.

Men whose conscience can't be purchased!
Your friend indeed, when you're not there!
When the teeth of foes are gnashing,
You feel twice a millionaire.

Let me be this man, Oh, let me
Qualify from day to day!
Faltering flesh! but soul triumphant!
Face like flint, and on my way!

* * *

START TODAY!

Win that victory now, my brother:
Do not put it off, I say.
If you wait until tomorrow,
'Twill be harder than today.

Habits strengthen every moment;

Weakness never wears away.
If you overcome that habit,
It's because you start today.

* * *

THE OUTSIDE OF THE CUP (Matt.23:25)

We washed his hands with soap three times a day;
He dare not have the slightest smudge on display;
But not so, his sins -- he let them stay.

* * *

UNTITLED #5

Twass the night before Christmas,
And Santa came first.
Christ was forgotten,
And left in the lurch.

Even the Father in heaven
Had to stay out of sight,
To make place for Santa
And his reindeer that night.

Even the angels in heaven had
To surrender their post,
And let Santa take over
And use it the most.

Santa's power was supreme,
As his praises are hurled --
As he sails to the housetops
All over the world.

To the sick and discouraged,
Real comfort he brings --
As the reindeer of Santa
Can fly without wings.

He's not ashamed
God's rights to devour,
As he fills children's' minds
With his omnipotent power.

* * *

PREPAREDNESS FOR PREACHING

We heat the truth in the forge of prayer,
And preach with all our might.
It warms our friends and burns our foes,
But it gives a wonderful light.

* * *

UNTITLED #6

Thank God for you, a tender friend
Whose love and faith have spurred me on
To better things.
I cannot now but hope that in my life
I may repay the joy
Your friendship brings.

* * *

CAREFUL TALKING

Between you and me, and a dead tree --
How much more careful can one be?

* * *

FAITHFULNESS COUNTS

What seems feasible
Is not the thing that counts.
Whatever God wants
Is all that weighs an ounce!

No one climbs life's mountains
At a bounce.
God knows what's best for us;
Faithfulness counts!

* * *

TRY AGAIN

Rotten ladder rungs may throw you

Without warning, as to when --
But splintered limbs need not despair you.
Repair the broken rung and try again!

* * *

TO _____

He's a preacher killer,
And I am on his list.
He makes mountains out of mole hills,
Not a one's he ever missed!

He's been in and out of churches;
Eight or ten, I'm told
He always leaves in a huff and puff --
Impossible to hold.

I was a model pastor,
The top man on his slate,
But before twelve months went out the door,
I'm a reprobate.

Oh, how he loved this pastor;
He sure did gulp him down,
But oh, that regurgitation,
Was the smelliest thing in town.

He bragged on me in public,
Till there was nothing more to say;
But when he turned against me,
'Twas quite the other way.

How my fault did sparkle!
And he dug them up galore,
And at the bottom of the list
He made up several more.

Now his present pastor,
He'll never criticize,
This ideal man just has no faults,
And he won't resort to lies!

If a fault should ever show its head,
He'll be quiet as a mouse;
Because he's the pastor now, himself

In the basement of his house!

* * *

TO OUR DEAR BROTHER COOLIDGE

Our dear brother Coolidge
Has been a true friend
I notice that both of us
Are near to the end

But we really are,
And the end is in view,
With heaven awaiting
For me and for you.

Surely, we are near the end
Of disappointments and heartaches too --
And the betrayal of an occasional false friend,
That made us discouraged and blue.

The end of nerves that are shattered:
The end of sleepless nights:
The end of bills that just won't wait:
And the destruction of our cherished rights.

No more toenails to trim
When we can't even bend.
It goes without saying
We're close to the end.

We'll come to the end of Satan's snares,
With heaven's portals in sight.
As God's sweet angels will come to receive us,
And we'll take our heavenly flight.

No more hearing aids --
Or eyeglasses either --
No canes or crutches,
Or a threatening fever.

We'll come to the end of Satan's snares
With heaven's portals in sight,
And when God's sweet angels come to receive us,
We'll take our heavenly flight.

The end of all grief.
And all heavy losses,
Misunderstandings,
And blood-stained crosses.

We're nearing the end
Of many sad things --
With the devil disposed of,
What comfort it brings!

No more aging --
Nor bald heads,
No more strokes
Or uncomfortable beds.

Where we are going there will be no end
Of anything good that God has made --
No darkness or storm clouds forever --
Nor pleasures that often fade.

No more heartaches,
Nor arthritis pain.
No deterioration
In body or brain.

Death here brings an end
Of all sin and strife --
With heaven approaching,
The goal of our life.

I'm sure of this -- we'll never come back,
To this sad world of day and night --
When we say farewell, it will be forever.
We'll be gone for good when we take that flight.

So, my dear brother Coolidge,
I may beat you home,
To be ever with Jesus
To never more roam.

Our flight is approaching.
We're thrilled at the thought.
We'll have ecstasy forever,
Over what God has wrought.

* * *

THE CARVING (Age 15 yrs)

By the brook an oak was standing,
'Twas a tall and massive tree,
Erect, and well-proportioned,
Like an athlete was he!

His bark was thick and solid,
His leaves a healthy green;
He appeared as good as the others,
But his heart could not be seen.

He gave the squirrels his acorns,
And sheltered the birds from the cold;
From his good deeds one might imagine,
He must have a heart of gold.

Many years ago, however,
A boy was living near,
And on the bark of this oak tree
His initial did soon appear.

'The scar was made in the sapling,
And showed quite plainly then,
But years added age, till the carving,
Was hid from the eyes of men.

But the judgment day was coming,
When the hidden should be revealed,
Every secret would be uncovered;
Nothing could remain concealed.

The woodsmen cut down this oak tree,
And carried it off to the mill;
The gang saws sliced it like butter,
And the planes smoothed the boards more still.

"And order's come in," said the Miller,
"For our highest class oak,
They want the best we can furnish,
To make the felly and spoke.

For, the wheel must be strong and enduring
To carry the heaviest load;
No matter how long the trail;

No matter how rough the road.

These boards of which we have spoken,
Were sent, that order to fill;
One flaw escaped the inspector,
That initial remained hidden still.

One piece which was shipped in this order
Was tested, its strength to betray;
It yielded to the increasing of pressure;
And had to be thrown away.

Thus a flaw from some evil committed
May follow a youth to the sod;
The weakness of character, though hidden,
Will make one less useful to God.

* * *

HE IS RISEN

Down in the garden the woman were weeping;
The gardener passed and she thought, "I'll ask him."
Where have they laid Him? My dear master's body --
Her eyes and her faith were both dim.

"Mary!" He spoke! and the words shot like arrows,
"Rabboni!" she cried, and fell right at His feet;
"Tell the disciples, and Peter," He told her.
"Touch me not," He had said, and her heart skipped a beat.

She arose from her kneeling, and fled from the garden,
She hunted up Peter and John on her way.
She told them the story -- the Master is risen!
They sped for the garden, and made no delay.

John arrived first and displayed the most caution,
Peter, less nimble, came up very soon.
Angels sat waiting -- they saw them and heard them --
Then fled with all haste from the tomb.

It seems I was with them, by faith on that morning,
And again, in the city, they waited, and then --
He appeared there among them, spoke kindly, then vanished;
"Keep the faith," He had warned them, "I'm coming again."

Yes, He is coming! We're watching and waiting.
We'll see Him as they did in the garden that day.
From the clouds He will beckon -- we'll rise then to meet Him.
Good-bye to life's sorrows -- we'll hasten away!

* * *

DES MOINES DILEMMA (Nov. 4, 1984)

I know I'm not a genius;
I may appear a dunce;
But have you seen one good thing about me
In the last six months?

Cast back your thoughts my brother,
Pray, try it at least once.
Can you remember saying something nice about me
In the last six months?

I used to have some virtues;
One might find them if he hunts.
Have they all passed into oblivion
In the last six months?

Good points sometimes might weaken
Under pressure of a crunch;
But its hard to believe that I've lost them all
In the last six months.

Perhaps for good points, it might be hopeless
To recapture the whole bunch.
But I'm hoping at least one comes back to me
In the next six months.

I won't run it all through again
Like a warmed-over turkey lunch.
But can you remember saying something nice about me
In the last six months?

If we meet in that Golden City,
Which we strive for only once,
I hope you'll see something good about me
Within six months.

* * *

DES MOINES LAMENT (JAN. 31, 1985)

I've played the game for many months
With the little men that cheat;
Till all my hopes and plans and dreams
Were in ashes at my feet.

If God will give me an extension of time
Beyond my seventy years,
I shall try to serve Him in such a way
That His summons will offer no fears.

I may not succeed in the future years
Any better than I have in the past;
But success is only a relative thing
In the records we'll be facing at last.

So, please close the book on my failure dear Lord,
And I'll glean in another field.
I'll plant and garner as best I can,
And pray for a better yield.

And when at length I hear God's call,
I stand in His Presence at last;
I hope my labors will prove some better
In the future than they did in the past.

* * * * *

ABOUT THE LOSS OF FRIENDSHIP

This next poem is based on a statement which Benjamin Franklin made. He said the greatest sorrow of his old age was the loss of friends he had out lived. Here is my poem:

The words of Ben Franklin
Have lived through the years;
They have waded through sorrow,
Through death and through tears.

The greatest of grief
When this man had turned gray,
Was the loss of dear friends
That had all passed away.

This philosophy of sorrow
To the world he would give;

He wept the most sorely
Over friends he'd outlived.

I too have had heartaches,
As the love flame burned on
With its torturing gloom,
After loved ones were gone.

I've stood by their graves
As my tears took their flight,
And embraced them again
With my dreams in the night.

This grief, I assure you,
Is taking its toll;
It refuses to die
As the years onward roll.

But a far greater sorrow
Than the one I have said,
Is the loss of dear friends,
WHO YET ARE NOT DEAD.

Had they gone to that country
Of paradise, fair,
I'd still feel their heartbeat,
As they'd love me from there.

But a far deeper anguish
Come from those who still live,
And yet, icy and silent
Is the treatment they give.

T'would be kinder by far
To weep on in the gloom
With their soul in that "City,"
And their flesh in the tomb.

Than to have them turn icy,
Who loved you one day;
Tell Franklin, "Be thankful"
His friends passed away.

* * * * *

NATURE POEMS

* * *

REBORN -- TRANSFORMED

Just a gnarly, twisted root of an old tree,
buried in the mud for years -- unwanted! unseen!
Then comes violent storms--wind--rain.
Rent from its prison -- borne on mad waters --
cast, to bleach upon the shore. --
Then, hot suns, envisioned eyes -- warm gaze --
friendly touch -- skillful hands. -- Then transformation! --
Now -- light-bearer, admired by everyone, in warm,
comfortable den where friends gather and children play.
-- A new world! and forgotten storms!

* * *

UNPERTURBED

I love the deep snow and the winds that blow,
And the winds that howl in the night;
It's the tempest in me that is raging you see,
With torrents of pouring delight!

And I love the balm of the motionless calm,
With flowers most fragrant and fair.
When all is asleep and the shadows are deep,
Let me breathe that kind of air!

As the miles slip by on life's long road,
Let the winds sweep down on me;
I'll cross the divide with a calm inside,
Like the breathe of eternity!

* * *

UNTITLED #7

I lay on the grass this evening,
Gazing up into the blue,
Which was filled with a million pinholes,
Where the light was shining through.

* * * * *

POEMS TO MATTIE

"Love is when I asked for her hand, she gave me her heart." -- and your love adds so much happiness to my life!

* * *

MATTIE AND JESUS AND ME!

We've had 40 grand years together
In our limited Journey of life--
And Mattie has filled her role nobly
As helpmeet, mother and wife.

Were we to live here on earth for an eon,
And never grow ancient a mite--
She'd still be my choice of companion
For the up and down journey of life.

Jesus has made our love precious--
His presence has smoothed out the way--
But in heaven we'll be with Christ forever.
For Eternity's unending day.

* * *

NO MATTER THE DISTANCE

No matter the distance,
Or the cause of my roam;
There's always a part of me
That never leaves home!

* * *

WHILE AWAY FROM HOME

The moon's looking down on Mattie;
The moon's looking down on me;
Six hundred miles and three week's time,
As lonesome as we can be!

The Lord's looking down on Mattie;
The Lord's looking down on me;
He must come first in everything--
That's the way we want it to be.

Heaven is pulling for Mattie,
And heaven is pulling for me;
Never more to stray, from the narrow way!
That's the joy God gives us, you see!

There'll be no lonely nights for Mattie;
There'll be no lonely nights for me,
On heaven's shore, we'll weep no more
For all eternity!

* * *

SECOND HAND HUBBY!

Like a second-handed something,
And the marks of time were rife;
Such was I, when Mattie took me
From the auction block of life.

Note the crowd stood grave and silent,
And the bidders turned their head;
First seemed puzzled, then with pity,
Wondered at the price she said.

"Well, I'll say!" the crowd said, staring
At my bald head and hollow cheeks;
But the secret was that Mattie
Had a liking for antiques!

* * *

MAGNANIMOUS MATTIE!

To magnanimous Mattie
From her depleted spouse!
Flat--broke--busted--
But not really a louse!
She deserves three presents,
Each costing a lot;
But he'll solve the problem
With what money he's got.

He has to be tighter than he used to was
Tain't his choice--it's 'jes because
His check's all spent before it come!

He really needs three instead of one!

So he figured it out. No don't berate.
He caught all three at a discount rate--
Killing three birds with one stone, Whoopee!
Valentine--Birthday--Anniversary!

Not bad for LSB

* * *

SAWDUST OR GOLD

God created Mattie,
Then He threw away the mold.
I'm worth my weight in sawdust--
She's worth her weight in gold!

-- May 12, 1992 --

* * *

TENNESSEE

The bottom fell out of everything,
And I was despondent and sad;
'Till God reached down into Tennessee,
And gave me the best that he had.

When the gloom was past, with dawn at last,
Foretelling a brighter day;
The Lord smiled down on Mattie and me,
And scattered the shadows away.

Discouraged was I, and wanted to die;
Life held no charms for me;
There seemed nothing ahead but monotonous dread,
'Till we met in Tennessee.

I had tried to live in the days gone by,
And recapture the fading past,
But God turned me about and headed me south,
And I found life's answer at last!

Now it's Mattie in sunshine and Mattie in storm;
She solved life's puzzle for me;

And led me away from the gloom of the grave,
To romance in Old Tennessee!

* * *

TO MATTIE -- Mother's Day -- 1989

I never knew my mother.
She died when I was small.
But God gave me a motherly wife,
To heal that hurt, withal.

* * *

TO MATTIE ON HER SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY

L. S. Boardman Feb. 21, 1991

Seventy years have slipped away,
With the best she gleaned from many a trial.
Mattie was happy, the price she paid,
As she carried her load with a smile.

She built her life on the Rock of Prayer,
And the Word of God was her faithful book.
She steered away from Satan's lair--
"Committed to Christ" was the road she took.

She was selfless and patient as she plodded along--
Never faltering, with Christ in her soul.
She struck out for heaven ignoring the throne.
She is stalwart in faith as she's nearing the goal.

It's my rare privilege to have such a wife,
So my heart or my feet would not go astray.
She knew how to put the true meaning in life,
As she journeyed along on the heavenward way.

Sooner or later I may travel alone--
Millions have had it and weathered the storm.
I'm only a transient, headed for HOME!
And if Mattie is taken, my heart will be torn.

But heaven's a place where all tears will be dried--
All heartaches forgotten as the eons unfold.
I'll ever be thankful she walked by my side

With love the most precious to the end of our role.

* * *

WHAT MATTIE MEANS TO ME AT SEVENTY --

1. Fond memory of youth at its best--
2. Faithful through the heavy years of labor--
3. Moral strength as physical vitality declines--
4. Serene as we near the portals of heaven.

* * *

To Mattie, after her seventy-second birthday: From her careless, lax, thoughtless, negligent, heedless, inattentive, inconsiderate, neglectful, remiss, slack hubby,

-- L. S. Boardman.

* * *

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MATTIE

Happy Birthday!
Sorry I'm late!
I remembered it happened,
But I forgot the date!

So don't you cry
Over something so slight--
True love is still warm--
Just an oversight!

And please don't worry,
And don't you fret,
Think of the nice things
I didn't forget!!!!

Happy Birthday, Mattie:
Of course it's from me!
A little late for seventy-two,
But early for seventy-three!!
From? Who else but L.S.B.

* * *

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY MATTIE
1952 -- 1985

A long ways ahead,
And a short ways back,
Depends on which way you turn--
But youth is grand,
As hand in hand
The ways of the Lord we learned.

Youth has fled
Toward what folk dread
And we are no exception.
Yet it's not so bad
As some have said,
Cause we still have
Lots of gumption!

Now far over the hill,
And the sun sinks low,
But our love is as strong as before.

Our bodies grow weak,
But our spirits, strong
As we're nearing Eternity's shore.

* * * * *

Mattie M. Boardman, 76, of 1606 E. Leach Ave. died of kidney failure Friday at Hospice Kavanagh House. Services will be at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Dunn's Funeral Home, with burial at Glendale Cemetery.

Mrs. Boardman was born in Carlyle, Tenn., and lived in Des Moines since 1975. She was a retired licensed practical nurse at Iowa Lutheran Hospital and a member of Des Moines Bible Missionary Church.

Survivors include her husband, L.S.; a son, Shelby of Des Moines; a stepson, Charles of Cincinnati, Ohio; a stepdaughter, Marion Wilhelm of Glens Falls, N.Y.; two brothers, Ira Biggs of Tennessee Ridge, Tenn., and Lester Biggs of Clarksville, Tenn.; three sisters, Lois Barbee and Myrtle Biggs, both of Nashville, and Vicki Cherry of Springfield, Tenn.; nine grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Friends may call after 5 p.m. Monday at the funeral home, where the family will be present from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Memorial contributions may be made to her church.

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IN CONCLUSION

* * *

THE LAST MILE WILL BE THE BEST

Some have had most heavy losses,
In the human aide of time;
Yet retain the all-essential,
Which makes everything sublime.

You and I are no exception,
As we tread life's narrow road.
We seek not a bed of roses,
Or a lessening of the load.

We seek Christ approval --
Nothing else has any claim
On our purified perfections.
As we press on in His Name!

We'll stay true to our commitments,
As we come through every test --
As we're nearing our promotion,
The last mile will be the best.

* * *

CALL MY NAME

Since there is life when death is over,
The toils of time will know no more of me.
I shall join the bloodwashed throne is heaven's city
Beyond the fitful, restless ebbing of the sea.

With every sin forgiven, all ills forgotten,
My torch shall bear a steady, burning flame,
If you have known me in this vail of sorrow
Wait on heaven's strand and call my name.

* * *

THAT'S HOW I MADE IT IN

The night was dark;
I traveled through the gloom.
I did not know the sun.
Would rise so soon!

But it rose again,
And brought a brand new day;
Yet I knew right well
It soon would fade away.

For nothing last
In this sad world of tears;
The days turn weeks --
The weeks to months -- then years!

As I was moving down
The westward slope --
Some things endure -- 'Tis faith,
And love, and hope

Those things as strong at night
Beneath the stormy sky;
So it's all the same,
Perchance I live or die!

He beckons me;
'Tis He who saved my soul!
My eyes are glued
To Him who calls the roll!

So come what may!
Bright sun or sallow moon;
I'm homeward bound!
I'll join them very soon!

I'll then forget
The way was ever rough.
I'll see His face;
And that will be enough!

The easy road
Is not the one for me!
Choose as you wish --
Mirage or certainty!

I'm homeward bound!
So come, my friend, with me;
We'll hit the coast --
And then put out to sea.

Now, travel-worn --
'Tis in the faded past!
I see His face,
And I am home at last!

T'was worth it all,
Since the day I broke with sin;
I kept the faith --
That's how I made it in.

* * * * *

THE END