

P O E M S

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by

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C o n t e n t s :

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Keep Fit

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I WONDER

Oh, how cruel war must be,
A thing I never want to see!
For with 'planes roaring in the air,
'Twill be like hell, I do declare.
And will our own air forces be
Able to give security,
Or will they lack sufficient strength
And lose the mastery at length?
And what about our navy, too ?
Can it still rule the ocean blue
And save this land from being starved
While others steal the fatted calf ?

THE GOOD SHIP QUEEN MARY

What a beautiful ship
The *Queen Mary* is!
A sight that nobody ought to miss.
'Twill live in my memory for e'er,
The thrill I had when I first saw her.

But some people, I am sorry to say,
The law they could not obey,
For some of them stole silverware—
'Twas enough to make a parson swear.
They really must have been drunk, I fear,
And should not have been allowed anywhere near,
Let alone admitted on the pier.

MY MEMORIES

As I awoke on a winter's morn
I felt that a new day had been born.
Everything was covered in white,
For it had been snowing in the night.
Then, as I looked out of the window,
My thoughts began to mingle:
They went back many, many a year.
How snowballs used to tingle
When they hit you on the ear!
And how up the hill we pulled our sledge
And came down to end with a spill in the hedge.
I remember getting fast on a briar
And wishing I'd stayed at home by the fire.
They were happy days, but now they're gone,
And it's time my daily work was done.
For the weather it may snow or blow,
But I've got to do my work, you know.

MY DEAR

Your hair is bright and shining fair,
Nothing with it can compare;
Your eyes, too, are soft and bright
Like the stars on a winter's night;
Gazing at your lovely face
I see nothing there but grace.
Your teeth are like a row of pearls,
As they were when you were a girl;
Your lips still give me the same thrill
As they did by the old windmill.
Dear, you may think I flatter you,
But you know what I say is true:
You're as sweet as you were in that dress of blue
Upon the day I married you.

ON MY BIKE

Down the winding lanes we ride,
My friend and myself, side by side,
Breathing in the clear fresh air,
For nothing with it can compare.
Through the wood and over the downs
Far away from smoky towns;
Up the hill and down the vale,
With a pause for a healthy pint of ale;
Then off again refreshed we go —
‘That’s the way to keep fit, you know!’

THE CRISIS

In the year of 1938
Many a heart was turned to hate,
And many of us felt despair
For war we had begun to prepare,
As we had promised another country
Service and help if need should be.
And now war seemed to draw so near
That England’s mothers shed a tear,
Fearing for the lives of their sons
Who might be slain by gas or guns.

Every effort seemed in vain;
War would surely start again,
And many an old soldier sighed
For comrades who in the last war died.
Was their sacrifice for naught?
They believed that they had fought
For peace, peace, everlasting peace!
Yet preparations for war did not cease.

But one man did not despair:
He went on a peace mission by air
And, with the help of two other nations,
Saved Europe from annihilation.

A LOVE-LETTER

Each night, dear, I dream of you.
Sometimes I cannot believe it true
That you and I were once sweethearts.
Oh, how did we come to part ?
Can't you give me just one more chance
To renew our old romance?
Maybe, when you've a moment to spare.
You'll ask yourself if it were fair
To turn me down, and all for this—
Because I gave your sister a kiss!

KEEP FIT

It is our motto to keep fit,
It teaches you to use your wit,
And that's the biggest thing of all,
For without wit your brains would stall.

THE CROWS' RETREAT

Oh, look, look at those crows
Watching where that farmer goes!
They think he's going to feed the hens,
And when he's gone they'll be in the pens
To help themselves,
Like a lot of mischievous elves.
But for once they won't have their fun,
For the farmer is going to get his gun
Which he has left in the fowl-run.
Now one old crow, who is crafty and sly,
Sees the danger and lets out a cry.
Soon not a crow is about in the sky,
And the farmer comes back in ire
To find this! His face goes red as fire,
He throws down his cap and in a rage
Shouts things I daren't repeat on this page!

John William Arthur Malthouse
born at Bulwell, Nottingham on 30th March 1912
Married Ivy Gertrude Kendrick at Rushall on 6th June 1942.
Children: Margaret Anne, Geoffrey Edward and Maureen
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Died at Easthorpe, Southwell on 26th June 1997