

THIS PAMPHLET IS DEDICATED TO  
THE AIRCREW OF THE R.C.A.F. WHO  
DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR  
COUNTRY, AND HUMANITY. IF IT  
BRINGS A MEASURE OF SOLACE TO  
THEIR PARENTS AND LOVED ONES,  
IT WILL HAVE FULFILLED  
ITS PURPOSE.

*In honoured Tribute to  
Pilot Officer L. G. Hellow,  
and with deepest  
sympathy on presumption  
of his Death on active  
Service. F. V. Heakes.*

AIR VICE-MARSHAL F. V. HEAKES, C.B.

*November 18, 1944.*

# I

## IN THE HEARTS OF MEN

There is a shrine in the hearts of men  
burning in national gratitude for the sacrifices  
of Canadian Youth, in their High Adventure,  
where, unstintingly they have given their All  
that decency and goodness should live on the  
earth and that the Rights of Man should not  
perish.

Yea, though they laid down their lives,  
They are not dead.  
For goodness lives after them,  
And they live in the Heart of their Country.  
By their effort men shall be free.  
By their nobility men shall know the finer  
way of life.  
By their example future generations will  
follow  
The Responsibilities of Nationhood.

## II

They were the Flower of Youth, conceived and nurtured in the heart of loving parentage, who but a day ago were the boys of our universities and high schools.

They were the boys who first found their adventure on the Canadian lakes and rivers, fishing the streams, hunting the forests, sitting beside their camp-fires, paddling their canoes. They were the boys who loved the mountains and the prairies, children of a young country.

Great numbers came from the cities, from the farms, from rural communities—but all had that love of the Out-of-Doors and a deep sympathy with Nature.

## III

These were the Boys of High Aspiration, whatever their walk of life. These were the Boys of Entitlement, whose heritage was the best that Canadian life had to offer, but who were denied its privileges by their great sacrifice.

They had aspired to earthly homes but attained unto Heaven. They aspired to the right to work but did their great work in one brief hour.

They aspired to Freedom but attained it for others.

Were their aspirations in vain? Nay, for of that substance shall be built, in their name, the spiritual life of Canada.

## IV

On the playfields of their schools, their churches, their communities, their clubs, they learned the good sportsmanship of hard endeavour, the speed of attack, the combination of play. They carried the ball, rushed the puck, defended and attacked. Took their knocks and gave them.

Boxed, wrestled and paddled. Heard the wild acclaim of applauding crowds. Took victory and defeat and always came back for more.

In the Game of Games, there were no crowds. Either alone or as a team, they faced the enemy, attacking and attacking, yielding to no one. Combining in their play. Calm, intent and deadly of purpose, playing for the stake of Death. But always with high heart and spirit unbroken. Coming in again and yet again, no matter what the odds.

Great individualists and great teams, whose fame will ring down the ages and point the way to all who follow.

## V

Were these supermen? Yes and No. No, in their own estimation; Yes, in ours.

The superman has confidence; they had it. The superman has vision; they had vision in high places. The superman accomplishes the impossible; they did it.

They faced danger—with strong heart. They went up into the darkness with the light of courage in their souls. They split the dawning day with fresh endeavour. They flew throughout the day with powerful thrust. They were mounted up on chariots of fire into the lists of Battle. The God of Battle was their aid, the star of Victory was their goal.

And yet they knew it not. They saw this as their task and boasted not about it, their duty which they took within their stride.

They heard not the praise of men, and knew not that it was their just due—

For they were simple Canadian boys, with

a straight forward intent and no thought of heroics.

We know their calibre, though they knew it not.

## VI

Did they know fear?

Of course they did, and conquered it.

Did they know the chances? Knew and laughed at them.

Did they play free and foolishly with Death? Only as men beyond their years in the full knowledge of their task and the determination of its execution.

Afraid of being afraid? Who knows the inner workings of the mind except by outward expression? And by outward expression none demonstrated fear of being afraid or fear of any man, principality or power.

## VII

What did they suffer?

Ah, even in this final extremity the good God was kind. Even when their wings failed them and their descent to earth commenced, provision was made for them.

Firstly, within themselves and their terrific concentration on their task, which permitted no time for self-centred thought, lay their great anaesthetic against despair, terror, mental or physical anguish.

Secondly, they were in their own medium, the air, and understood it, not as some strange mysterious terror-holding medium, but for what it was—their sphere of endeavour. The element to which they had aspired and attained. The element in which they had been trained, in which they had operated and lived in as their normal way of life. They feared neither height nor depth, neither climbing nor falling, but accepting each as within the possibility of their experience to be dealt with to the best of their ability and never to surrender while breath and consciousness remained to them.

## VIII

Were the blow sufficiently hard which they encountered, consciousness passed with instantaneous speed. Were it ultimate, life passed as quickly, without pain, without mental anguish.

Were they hit in the air by enemy fire, Nature applied an immediate anaesthetic in the form of shock, dulling all pain.

Did they fall, there was no shrieking descent to earth as so commonly pictured. For had they their faculties, they were intent on regaining control, or in escaping or in helping others to escape. In the meantime they suffered no great discomfort, no panic but with the sublime faith of Youth expected to pull out of it, even until the last moment.

The last moment did not exist for them. They did not "die" for they could not recognize death. It came more quickly to them than the perception of it could possibly come. They passed through the greatest of human experiences without knowing they had crossed the threshold.

That is how merciful death is to the men who fly in the air or die on the ground following their descent.

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Three anaesthetics there are:

Death which they cannot perceive.

Unconsciousness that draws the curtain on pain.

Shock that subdues.

And a fourth, in that extreme of extremes in the air—fire, the anaesthetic of inhaled flame, complete and instantaneous, for the lung is seared and blessed unconsciousness follows that one gasp.

And the mercies of Man, the healing sciences that first deal with shock, to those who survive. We must be grateful to these. The drugs that are quickly administered before the passing of shock. The administration of Plasma. The modern treatment of wounds and burns. The skill of our surgeons, the devotion of our nurses.

This is the picture of Grace and Mercy to comfort the heart of those who remain, and to bring surcease to the minds of those who picture beyond the reality.

## IX

Ah, these are at Peace! The noises of war are suddenly caught into an ineffable quiet. Their task ended. Their mighty effort garnered into the harvest of the work of all good men.

The little sins of earth are as nothing in their vast sacrifice. Forgotten as the passing of a drifting cloud.

But they are not forgotten, these gallant, glorious sons of man who in youth attained so closely to the stature of the Divine.

Ah, torn heart, close the page of sorrow in the Book of Life, and turn to the page of the Song of their glorious endeavour.

For this is yours even as it is theirs; written in their life blood and in the blood of our race.

You are not alone in your sorrow. The nation mourns with you. You are not alone in their glory, for in the Nation are they glorified. Reverently we say, "Theirs is the Kingdom and glory."

Mourn not for them as dead (though your hearts bleed) but rejoice in their imperishable conquest over Death.